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WOMEN IN FOLK ELEMENTS OF BENGAL

In October, 1968 issue of this journal Alamgir Jalil discussed the position of Bengalee women with illustrations from the folklore of Eastern Pakistan. The following essay deals with the roles of Bengalee Hindu women as they are depicted in Bengal folklore.

In the Rig Veda we see the term "जायेदस्तं i.e. wife serves to adorn the house. Woman is the only prop of the house; but the family and the society are also supported by her. The family becomes dry and barren if there is no existence of a wife; the society becomes paralysed if it is not supported and helped by the wife. Men cannot live without women.

Women are generally conservative. They bear traditions which are filtered from one generation to another generation. Men have got out-door duties, they entangle themselves with the thread of the out-side world and endeavour to seize culture from outside; hence the house-hold matters become compressed into a smaller compass to them. Women have got indoor duties—they bear the burden of sustaining others of the family—they take care of the children.

This country was, no doubt, the abode of the non-Aryans before spreading the Aryan culture. With the advent of the Aryan culture, the non-Aryans had not been totally obliterated from this land. Their ideas of society, sense of religion, civilisation and culture still occupied a prominent position. Therefore, we see, by the side of the Aryan administration, some sort of culture and tradition which cannot be explained in the light of the Aryan ethics. It is interesting to note that these cultures have been in practice throughout the length and breadth of this land since the time immemorial. Most of the non-

Aryan elements had been embraced, as a result of which there was an admixture of the non-Aryan and the Aryan culture. The Atharva Veda bears the witness of it.

Popular tales and legends, proverbs, etc, are not composed by the individual poets; these have come down orally. Though the doggerel lyrics are not arranged systematically—they have got some force and consistency in tunes. The rumours are known by long observation; they are imaginative and form ideas. The tales are resounding in the ages and in the farthest parts of the land. In the long run some events have been transformed into folklore. Both men and women are the father and the mother of these tales. The matured women who have got sufficient knowledge and experience in housewifery, have expressed their thoughts in these legends with sharp but simple dialects. We now proceed to paint them in the light of these impressive tales.

Daughter :

Since the Vedic Age, the daughters have been regarded as an object of sympathy and kindness, whereas sons, the lamp of the blue.

कृपणं दुहितो पुत्रोऽ ज्योतिः परमे व्योमान।

Several examples will testify the fact—

মেয়েছেলে কাদার ডেলা। ধপাস করে জলে ফেলা॥

(A girl child is like a lump of clay, only fit for dropping into water with a splash)

Again—

পুতের মুতে কড়ি। মেয়ের গলায় দড়ি॥

(The filth of a son begets money; let the daughter go to Hell).

After the birth of a daughter child, the parents become faded with grief; no conch shell is sounded as a sign of good-omen. The parents, on the other hand, having a male-child become rapturous. The family where only the male-child is born, desires to have a daughter-child also.

একলা মায়ের ঝি। গরব করবো না তো কি॥

(Only daughter of my mother, why should not I proud of it ?)

Education :

कन्यापेवं पालणीया शिक्षणीयाति यत्नतः

(Nourish your daughter as you do for your son, and educate her with great care).

The Learned Manu opined this. Though we have seen one or two learned Bengali girls like Hati Vidyalankar, Subhadra, we can emphati-

cally say that there was no scope of female education is Bengal till the first decade of the 19th century. In 1819, the first free girls' school was established in Bengal by the Female Juvenile Society and the total roll-strength of the students in that year was only 8. In 1822 was published "Strisikahsa Vidhayak" (booklet for the female education), which helped much to spread the female education in Bengal. This book was written by Shri Gour Mohan Vidyalankar. Prior to that the general mass had a peculiar faith i.e. the women after acquiring education loose their husbands and do not care their beloved. In those days, amongst women, a selected few could read the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. But gone are those days.

Regarding female education, we have gathered only one doggerel lyric—

লিখে পড়ে হল রাঁড়। বুলে যেন উদোম ষাঁড ॥

(Being educated the woman looses her husband, and grazes like an united independent ox).

Marriage :

With the growth of a daughter, the mental agony of the parents goes on. The anxiety of the parents knows no bounds.

মেয়ে মেয়ে মেয়ে, তুষ করলো খেয়ে।
হরিভক্তি উড়ে গেল মেয়ের পানে চেয়ে ॥

(The parents forget to observe the rites of Lord Krishna, failing to procure the bridegroom for t' eir daughter).

The parents become anxious to give their daughter's marriage with a suitable bridegroom.

অন্ন দেখে দেবে ঘি। পাত্র দেখে দেবে ঝি ॥

(Look for fine boiled rice before you serve ghee, find out a suitable bridegroom before you give your daughter in marriage).

No one can say that if the daughter becomes graceful, she may have a suitable bridegroom.

অতি বড় ঘরণী না পায় ঘর। অতি বড় সুন্দরী না পায় বর ॥

(An ultra good housekeeper does not find a house-hold, an excessively beautiful girl does not find as a suitable husband).

Thus we find an aged husband to a young wife.

গৌরী-লো ঝি। তোর কপালে বুড়ো বর আমি করবো কি ॥

(Oh, sweet daughter of mine, what could I do if you have an aged bride-groom ?)

A handsome bride-groom, sometimes, has got an ugly better-half.

কনক চাঁপা ছেলের গা। বউ কোন তার কাকের ছা॥

(The son looks like a golden flower, his bride looks like a crow).

The itelligent person advise to marry plain-looking girls.

গাই কিনবে ঝাপড়ি। বউ আনবে ফেতড়ী॥

(Buy a sleak cow, bring home a plain-looking daughter-in-law).

In Bengal a bit of popular custom can be seen along with the social marriage system of the *Sastras*. On the very day of marriage wet condiments of the embelic myrobalan (Amlaki) and Monamunis are put afloat on water. It is observed in the house of the bride. Monamunis resemble cardamom. Two married women simultaneously grind the embelic myrobalan on a flat stone and they put *Sandesh* (a kind of sweetmeat) into the mouth, each other. Until and unless the grinding of the embelic myrobalan is finished, they keep the *Sandesh* within their oral cavity. After the grinding is finished, the substance thus prepared is divided equally into twenty one shares on the twenty one betel leaves. Afterwards, Monamunis are made to flat in a little tub of water. If Monamunis soon unite together, it would be ascertained that the couple will see themeselves eye to eye. If there is delay, it is understood that they might not enjoy a cheerful life.

In some parts of Bengal, the bride-groom is caused to stand on the courtyard before marriage, and two married women measure him with the stick of jute plant. Hands, legs, chest, back, length, breadth etc. are measured. After that the stick is broken and burnt with fire which emits heat. Two ears and two hands of the bridegroom are tied with the help of a thread—five betel leaves, five betel nuts and one silver coins are placed on his palm. The mother-in-law then appears there and gives him shuttle and utters—

কড়ি দিয়ে কিনলাম। দড়ি দিয়ে বাঁধলাম॥

হাতে দিলাম মাকু। ভ্যা করতো বাপু॥

(You have been purchased with money and tied with thread; I put this shuttle into your hand, will you please beat out once).

Then, the mother-in-law comes behind the back of the bride-groom, brushes his hair and streatches the end of her cloth. Now the hands of the bride-groom are untied—he puts betel leaves and nuts and a silver coin into the spread-out cloth of his mother-in-law. This is called 'Kanak-Anjali'.

The aged women, still, in the present day, endeavour secretly to keep their husbands in control with the help of some herbs and medicine. Sometimes such practice brings misfortune. "Somebody's mother-in-law has applied medicines to the son-in-law, as a result of which the son-in-law becomes mad"—many such charges are raised in the rural areas of Bengal. A beautiful description can be seen in Ruparam Chakravorty's Dharmamangal (17th Century). At the time of Ranjabati's marriage—

সাতঘরে সুন্দরী সহিয়া আনে জল। ঝারি পুর্য়া জল রাখে দিয়া পাঁচফল ॥
সাত আয়্য পাঠাইল কুমারের বাড়ী। মাথায় বহিয়া আনে সুমঙ্গল হাঁড়ি ॥
আনিল গোমুণ্ডহাঁড়ি কাপাশ বাড়ি হৈতে। চারি আয়্য জড় হয়্যা আঙ্গিনাতে পোতে॥
আয়্য দিল ঔষধ গুবাক তিন কুড়ি। তাহার উপরে রাখে গামারের পিড়ি ॥
আপনি মঞ্জুরা সাজে বরণের ডালা। ঔষধ করিতে চায় ছামুনির বেলা ॥
হাত-পেড়ি আন্যা দিল মঞ্জুরার চেড়ি। গণ্যা গণ্যা বারি করে ঔষধের বড়ি ॥
আশ্বিন পূজার যোগে তুলেছে কাজল। যুবতী লোচনে দিলে পুরুষ পাগল ॥
ভেঁটু খই ভাজ্যা ছিল উপরাগ দিনে। করবীর ছড়ি মূল আছে তার সনে ॥
বাসরে খাওয়াতে চায় গুয়া পান দিয়া। সারাদিন থাকিব রঞ্জার মুখ চায়্যা ॥

(The queen of Gourd brought water from a distance place, and filled a water busket along with five fruits. Seven maid-servants were sent to the potter's house to bring 'Mangal Hanri' (a pot filled with sacred water and placed as an omen of auspiciousness) on head. 'Gomundahanri' (the vessel on which a cow-head is painted) was brought and a team of four maid-servants buried it inside the court-yard. One of the maidservants put sixty medicated betel leaves on which a wooden carpet made up on an ornamental tree (Gmelina arborea) was placed. Manjura herself made a flat shallow basket of good omen, and prepared medicine at the time of *Chhamani*. Manjura's maid-servant came with a box in hand and after counting, filled the basket with the pills of medicine. Lamp-back (Kajal) was procured in the month of *Asvin* during the grand Puja. A man becomes insane to see this lamp black on the eyes of a woman. On the day of an eclipse (moon or sun), fired rice of *Ventu* along with the stem and roots of Oleander were collected. The substances thus procured were put to the bride-groom in his bed-room along with betel-leaves and betelnuts. Hence he was inclined too much to Ranja to have her company all day long).

A peculiar ceremony is observed at marriage by the female friends of the bride in respect of the bridegroom before the actual marriage. This is called 'Stri-achar'. After the ceremony, in side the bed-room of the newly married couple on the night of marriage, the sister-in-law, wives of brothers-in-law, grand-mothers-in-law begin to cut joke with the bride-groom. The sister-in-law addresses—

কোথা থেকে এলে তুমি উঠানে দিলে পা। উঠানটা ছিঁড়ে গেল সেলাই করে যা ॥
(Where do you come from and step in the courtyard? The courtyard is torn into pieces, you please stich them).

The intelligent bridegroom then and there replies—

বাটা ভরে পান আন গাল ভরে খাই। উঠানটা তুলে ধর সেলাই করে যাই ॥
(Bring betels in the betel box, I shall chew them at my heart's content; please lift the courtyard, I shall stitch it).

The grand-mother-in-law addresses—

ওগো বর, এলাম তোমার বাসরে একটা গান গাওনা শুনি।
যদি না গান গাইতে না পার, মোর নাতিনের পায়ে ধর,
নৈলে মিলবে না ও-চাঁদ বদণী।
(Oh, dear, I have come to your bed-room to hear a song, please sing a song. If you fail to do so, you won't have the lovely face of my grand-daughter until and unless you fall at her feet).

In Bengal, the parting time of the bride creates a pathetic scene. The parents with tears in eyes give their daughter to the bride-groom. They become anxious to think how their daughter will lead their lives in husband's house.

আজ দুর্গার অধিবাস কাল দুর্গার বিয়ে। দুর্গা যাবে শ্বশুর বাড়ী সংসার কাঁদায়ে ॥
মা কাঁদেন মা কাঁদেন ধুলায় লুটায়ে। সেই যে মা পলাকাটি দ্যাছেন গলা সাজায়ে ॥
বাপ কাঁদেন বাপ কাঁদেন দরবার বসিয়ে। সেই যে বাপ টাকা দ্যাছেন সিন্দুক সাজায়ে
ভাই কাঁদেন ভাই কাঁদেন আঁচল ধরিয়ে। সেই যে ভাই কাপড় দ্যাছেন আলনা সাজায়ে
বোন কাঁদেন বোন কাঁদেন খাটের খুরা ধরে! সেই যে বোন গাল দ্যায়েছ
ভাতারখাকী ব'লে ॥
(To-day is the day of Adhivas of Durga and to-morrow the day of her marriage. Durga goes to her father-in-law's house throwing all the members into grief. The mother cries rolling about the dust—she gives her daughter a necklace, *Palakati*, (kind of ornament). The father sheds tears with many others, he gives his daughter a chest, full of coins. The brother cries by pulling on the end of the cloth of his sister. He adorns many shelves with clothes for his sister. The younger sister cries holding a leg of a couch- she once addressed her with the word '*Bhatar Khaki*' (who devoures her beloved).

Here the dowry system is in vogue, from the either parties "Kanaya-Pan" (daughter to be sold to the bride-groom) is in practice in the lower strata of the society. Old doggerel verses bear the witness of it.

বাপ কাঁদে গো বাপ কাঁদে গো ছাদনা তলায় প'ড়ে।
তখন বাবা টাকা নিলে আঁচলা পোতা করে॥

(The father began to shed tears at Chhadanatala (a covered place where both bride and bride-groom are allowed to stand) for his daughter who was ready to go to her father-in-law's house. To the daughter, her father's tear was nothing but the crocodile tear as he never hesitated to drain the purse of the bride-groom's father).

Again—

এত টাকা নিলে বাবা দূরে দিলে বিয়ে।
এখন কেন কাঁদছ বাবা গামছা মুড়ি দিয়ে॥

(Oh, father, you gave your daughter in marriage at a distant place having so much money; then why father you were shedding tears by covering your face with a towel?)

Wife:

Men are generally susceptible to fair-sexes, the husband loves his wife dearly. On the otherhand, the wife loves her husband with all her heart. Though there is a magnetic attraction between the husband and the wife, many unpleasant incidents happen. Sometimes the conjugal life becomes cheerful, sometimes it is full of quarrels. As regards to conjugal love one or two examples are cited—

আজকের মাগ তুমি রেঁধো না রেঁধো না।
চাল চিবিয়ে খাব আমি কেঁদো না কেঁদো না॥

(you are my newly-wed wife, do not you go to the kitchen today; you need not worry for that I shall chew raw rice).

মাগ মাগ মাগ, মাগ আসে থাক। মাগ মাগ মাগ, মাগ মাথার পাগ॥

(Let my newly-wed wife eat at first, for she is a turban on my head).

And

যারে যেমন গড়েছে বিধি! সেই ভাতারের পরম নিধি॥

(However a girl might be fashioned by the creator, she is but her husband's darling).

Here is an example where there is no conjugal love:

পুরুষের ভালবাসা। মোল্লার মুর্গী পোষা॥

(Husband loves his wife as the Moslim priest love his cock).

And another,

এত রসে করি ঘর। তবু মিনসে বাসে পর॥

(I run the household at so much pains, still my man treats me distantly).

Or

নগরে না পেয়ে ঠাঁই। ঘরে এসে বউ কিলায়॥

(Being insulted by others, the husband gives his wife a blow with the fist).

Mother-in-law :

A pleasant atmosphere is created in the household both by the mother-in-law and by the daughter-in-law. But there is also an envious circle. Some mothers-in-law in the villages are spiteful and malicious in nature. They off and on, tried to find out faults in the daily activities of their daughters-in-law. But now-a-days, this atmosphere is getting changed. Wives of the bread-earned husbands endeavour most to find loofholes of their mothers-in-law at every step. If cited, one or two examples will satisfy us—

কলির কথা কইগো দিদি কলির কথা কই।

গিন্নির পাতে টক আমানি, বউ-এরপাতে দই॥

(I speak of the modern days, sister of mine to wit, the mistress of the house is served state rice gruel, while the daughter-in-law eats curds).

Then

পদ্মমুখী মেয়ে আমার শ্বশুর-বাড়ী যায়।

খাঁদানাকী বউ-এসে বাটার পান খায়॥

(The lotus-faced daughter of mine is sent to her father-in-law's house; the cut-nosed daughter-in-law eats betel from my own betel-box).

Or

বউ নয় তো হীরে। কাল দিয়েছি পাটের শাড়ী, আজ দিয়েছে ছিঁড়ে॥

(The daughter-in-law is like a piece of diamond (ironically) but an injured; a silken cloth is torn to pieces which was brought yesterday).

Nanad :

Not only mother-in-law, but also the husband's sisters or *nanads* many a time take part to twist their brother's wives. The widowed sisters or tenderaged unmarried sisters torture their brother's wives. Since they are helpless and unhappy, so they cannot tolerate other's happiness.

যেমনি দাদা গুণমণি। তেমনি বউ রাসমণি॥

(As my brother is a paragon of virtue, so, indeed, is his wife a dancing jewel).

Thus the brother's wife laments

ননদী বিষের কাঁটা। বিষমাখা দেয় খোঁটা॥

(Husband's sister is none but a poisonous thorn, her poinsonous stings give me much pain).

Or

ননদিনী রায়বাঘিনী। দাঁড়িয়ে আছে কালসাপিনী॥

(Husband's sister is a furious tigress, smarts like a venamous snake).

If an opportunity comes, the daughter-in-law catches her husband's sister and inspiint her teeth on her.

দেওরা রে দেওরা, এর বেওরা কি।

নন্দাই-এর কোলে কেন শোয় না ঠাকুরঝি॥

(Oh, husband's younger brother, what's the matter? why does not my sister-in-law lie on the lap of her husband?)

Co-wife:

The Hindus should marry once, not twice. It is codified by the Indian Constitution. It is a known fact that Hindus had many wives. The *kulinas* would practise the *Kulachara.*

In Bengal, the *Kulinas* inspired men of eminent discent to marry many wives. As a consequence, the houses of the *Kulinas* were packed full with so many wives who chirped like birds. Sometimes their chirper would pour the ears obsence language. On the 23rd April, 1836 it was published in the 'Jnanweshan Patrika" a list of the *kulinas* who had many wives. The list gave us the following—

"Twenty seven Kulinas married 818 girls. Ramchandra Chattapadhyaya of Mayapara had 62 wives and his name was headed the list. The enemity of co-wife has been depicted in the 'Munger Inscription' of king Devapala and in the 'Bangard Inscription' of King Mahipala I. The picture of many wives has been painted in the Belap Inscription of King Bhojabarman.

Kabikankan Mukudaram Chakravorty, in his 'Chandimangal' gave a vivid description of quarrel between Lahana and Khullana. This picture is the image of the Bengali Hindu Society.

মল্লা যেন কোন্দলে যুঝে দুসতীন।

বিদেশে সদাগর, পাইয়া শূন্যঘর,

লাজ ভয় হইল হীন॥

বড় বাড়ী প্রবলা, ছোট জন একলা,

কলহ হইল সেইদিন।

চক্ষে চক্ষে চাহিয়া, রোষযুত হইয়া,
খুল্লনা হৈল বলাধীন ॥
চরণ খর খর, আদেশে ধর ধর,
কর্ণেত দোলমান সোণা।
করিয়া মহাক্রোধ, না মানে উপরোধ,
খুল্লনা মারিল ঠোনা ॥
মূর্চ্ছাগত হৈয়া, ভূতলে পড়িয়া,
দেখয়ে সরিষার ফুলে।
সম্বিত পাইয়া, উঠিয়া কাঁপিয়া,
দুহারে ধরিল চুলে ॥
চট চট চাপড়, ছিন্তিলেক কাপড়,
বেগে মারিল কঙ্কণ।
দোঁহে করে ধুম, কিলের গুম গুম,
মেঘ যেন শিলা বরিষণ ॥
কিঙ্কিনী কন্ কন্, বাজয়ে ঝন ঝন্,
ঘর বাজে সদাগর-বাসে।
দেখি হুড়াহুড়ি, বড় ঘরের বহুড়ি,
নারীগণ পলায়ে ত্রাসে ॥

(The merchant Dhanapati who had two wives was at a distant country. During his absence, two co-wives fought with each other like wrestlers. They dared none. The elder wife was strong enough ; she made an altercation with the younger who was almost helpless. Khullana became furious, started at her eyes and burst into rage. Her feet began to tremble speedily, her golden earning began to oscilate. She did not hear request ; being raged, Khullana stroke gently on the cheek of Lahana with a clenched forefinger. She got faint on the ground and her vision was clouded. When her sense came back she got up with shivering feet and caught Khullana with her hairs with two strong fists. Slapping went on, clothes were torn, she hit Khullana forcibly with her bracelets. Two co-wives exchanged with each other severe blows as if the cloud came down with hail-stone. The bracelets poured the jingling of ornaments into the merchant's house ; finding them in hand-to-hand fight, the neighbours took to their heels in terror).

There are many doggerels regarding the co-wives' quarrel :—

সুয়ো হলো রাজরাণী। দুয়ো হলো ঘুঁটেকুড়ানী ॥

(Whereas the beloved co-wife is the queen, the neglected co-wife is the collector of the dried cakes of cowdug).

Then again

সুয়ো যদি নিম দেয় তিনি হন চিনি।
দুয়ো যদি চিনি দেয় নিম হন তিনি ॥ (ভারতচন্দ্র)

(If the beloved co-wife gives Nim (a very bitter fruit), it tastes sweet; but if the neglected co-wife serves sugar, it tastes bitter like Nim. -Bharatchandra).

আন্ মাগীর আন্ চিন্তে। দুয়ো মাগীর ভাতারের চিন্তে ॥

(The other woman has other cares, but the neglected co-wife thinks only for her husband).

নিম তেতো, নিসিন্দা তেতো, আর তেতো খ'র।
তার চেয়ে অধিক তেতো বোনসতীনের ঘর ॥

(Though Nim tastes bitter, Nishinda tastes bitter, and catechu tastes bitter; the house-hold of the sister co-wife tastes more bitter).

When the enmity of the co-wives goes to the extreme many unpleasant events take place. To kill the co-wives with poison is not a strange fact. It happens off and on. The following are examples.

অশথ কেটে বসত করি। সতীন কেটে আল্তা পরি ॥

(Let one cut down an Aswatha tree and build my residence there; Let me kill my co-wife and paint my feet with her gore).

যমকে ভাতার দিতে পারি। তবু সতীনকে দিতে নারি ॥

(The husband can be suffered to death, but not to be given over to the co-wife).

Unhappy match:

Then there is a problem of unhappy match. A well-to-do old man is at liberty to marry a young daughter of a poor man, especially the aged widower receive a girl in marriage to lessen the responsibility or liability of a peniless father. This sort of marriage brings unhappiness. The Sanskrit literature, castes a side-look of it—वृद्धस्य तरुणी भार्य्या (Young bride of an old bridegroom). In the "Dharmamangala" we see that Karnashen, an old feudal chief of Gourd took over Ranjavati, a young girl in marriage. Mahamad, the brother of Ranjavati put a strong opposition against this matchless marriage. There are so many doggerels regarding the matchless marriage.

একবরের স্ত্রী হেলাফেলা। দোজবরের স্ত্রী গলার মালা ॥

(The first wife of a man is neglected, the second wife is cared with reverence).

একবরে ভাতারের মাগ চিংড়ীমাছের খোসা।
দোজবরে ভাতারের মাগ নিত্যি করেন গোঁসা॥
তেজবরে ভাতারের মাগ পাতে বসে খায়।
চারবরে ভাতারের মাগ কাঁধে চ'ড়ে যায়॥

(First wife of a man is the shell of a prawn. Second wife of a man becomes enraged. Third wife of a man takes her meal with her husband. Fourth wife of a man is carried on shoulders of husband).

Motherhood :

The mothers occupy a prominent place in the Indian society. Before their giving birth to child, they off and on feel for their future offsprings. The charming image of the mother is depicted in many doggerel verses :—

অশত্থের ছায়াই ছায়া। মায়ের মায়াই মায়া॥

(The *Asvatha* tree gives shadow ; the mother is affectionate).

মা চায় পেটের দিকে। মাগ চায় গ্যাঁটের দিকে॥

(Mother is solicitous for the health, but the wife is interested in the purse).

আঁধার সংসার তার। মা নাই ঘরে যার॥

(Darkness prevails there where mother is absent).

Sister :

The relation between brothers and sisters are charming and bewitching until and unless they are unmarried. The married girl, on the eve of her departure from father's house, encircles the neck of her brother with arms in great love and affection and insist him on his going to her father-in-law's house. The brother, in return, tries to console her agonising heart. They do not want to create a gulf between themselves. Generally on the day of 'Bharatridwitiya' (i.e. the second lunar day of the light fornight in the month of Kartika on which a Hindu brother is given a *tilak* etc. by his sister) the brotherly affection of the sister crops up ; the sister imprints on her brother's forehead a sacred dot of sandal and utters like this—

ভায়ের কপালে দিলাম ফোঁটা। যমের দুয়ারে পড়লো কাঁটা॥

(I put a dot of sandal on the forehead of my beloved brother ; Pluto (Yama or the death-god) is afraid of it).

In most cases this sacred tie becomes flaccid in the absence of the father. After the death of father, the son becomes the master of the house and is closely engaged to his house-hold along with his wife and children. Hence the brother forgets his sister. But coming of the sister-in-law aggravates the forgetting to a great extent. As a result, the sisterly affection dies. Some are of opinion that attraction of sister is greater than that of the brother. The verse cited below bear the witness of the fact—

শশা খেয়ে যেমন জলকে টান। তেমনি ভায়ের বোনকে টান॥

গুড় খেয়ে যেমন জলকে টান। তেমনি বোনের ভাইকে টান॥

(As there is no inclination to drink water after eating cucumber, so, indeed, a bother has little affection for his sister. But as one drinks water after eating a sweet dish, so, indeed dies a sister hanker after her brother's welfare).

Then again

ভাই-এর ভাত। ভাজের হাত॥

(Brother finds foods, but it's serving lies with-his wife).

Brata rites :

The Bengali women observe fasting for the welfare of the member of their families. They perform many a 'Parvas' on particular days, all the year round. At the time of fasting they take nothing, even a drop of water to drink. Sometimes the member of the family become annoyed too much with them. Here is a list of the months when women fast.

In the month of Baisakh the number of Bratas (abstinence from food) are many as for example—Haris Mangal Chandi, Sivabrata, Punyi Pukur,, Dash Puttal, Haricharan Asvatha Pata, Gokal, Prithivi, Phalgochhano, Gupta Dhana, Nit Sindur, Sandhyamani, Kala Chhara, Ada Halud, Rupa Halud, Adar Singhasan, etc.

Month of Jaistha—Aranya Sasthi, Joymangal Chandi, etc.

Month of Ashar—Bipattarini, etc.

Month of Sravana—Lotan Sasthi, etc.

Month of Bhadra—Lakshmi, Chapra Sasthi, Manasa, etc.

Month of Asvin—Kojagari Lakshmi, Durga Sasthi (Bodhan Sasthi), Soubhagya Chaturthi and Gopastami, etc.

Month of Kartik—Yama Pukur, Lakshmi, etc.

Month of Agrahayan—Kshetra Vrata, Mula Sasthi, Kalui Mangal Chandi, Sankat Mangalbar, Natai Mangal Chandi, Senjuti, Ral Durga and Etubrata, etc.

Month of Pous—Lakshmi, Patai Sasthi, Suyo-Duyo, Tush-Tusli, Ral Durga, etc.

Month of Magh—Sital Sasthi, Sankata Mangal Chandi, and Ral-Durga, etc.

Month of Falgun—Siva Ratri and Ral Durga, etc.

Month of Chaitra—Lakshmi, Asoke Sasthi, and Nila Sasthi, etc.

Besides these there are many Bratas which are performed throughout the year i.e. Mangal Chandi, Eyo Samkranti, Madhu Samkranti, Nitya Sindur, Sandhyamani, Nakhchhuta (this Brata is to be performed for four years) and Solakala. The Akshoy Tritiya Brata is sub-divided into four—Akshoy Ghata, Akshoy Sindur, Akshoy Kumari and Akshoy Fal. Mauni Amabasya and Baramasya are also observed is Bengal.

Of the list cited above, the following *Bratas* are performed by the married women with keen interest :—Eyo Samkranti, Phal Gachhano, Gupta Dhan, Madhu Samkranti, Nitya Sindur and Nit Sindur, Sandhya Mani, Nakha Chhuta, Kala Chhara, Solakala, Ada-Halud, Rupa Halud Akshoy Ghata, Akshoy Sindur, Akshoy Kumari, Akshoy Phala, Adar Singhasan and Saubhagya Chaturthi. Nit Sindur and Nitya Sindur are the same only difference in vocabulary.

The virgin daughters observe the following Bratas : Siva Brata, Punyi Pukur, Dash Puttal, Hari Charan, Asvatha Pata, Gokal, Prithivi, Yamapukur, Senjuti and Tush-Tushu.

It may be mentioned here that in various regions, the different kinds of *Bratas* are being performed. Besides the Bratas described above, the following *Bratas* are also being observed—i.e. Jala Samkranti, Mangal Samkranti Janmastami, Radhastami, Durbastami, Talnavami, Ananta Chaturdashi, Kul-kuluti, Ram Navami, Bhaduli, Basudhara, Rone-Eyo, Kukuti, Magha Mandal, Rathai, Gashi, Kshetra Pal, Ekchora, Sashpata or Bhanjo, Kartik, Uttam Thakur, Rasakalyan, Holi etc. The writer expresses his inability for he is unable to treat the stories of these Bratas individually in detail.

Now we are citing a few verses that would enable the readers to understand what these Bratas tell us—

(a) *Verses of Punyi Pukur Brata*—

পুণ্যিপুকুর পুষ্পমালা কে পূজেরে দুপুর বেলা ?
আমি সতী লীলাবতী, ভাই-এর বোন পুত্রবতী।
হয়ে পুত্র মরবে না, পৃথিবীতে ধরবে না।

(Who does worship a sacred tank and a garland of flowers at noon ? I am Lilabati who has chastity ; I am a sister of brothers I have offsprings who won't die—the world will be too small to provide them).

(b) *Verses of Dasa Puttal Brata—*

এবার মরে মানুষ হবো, রামের মত পতি পাব।
,, ,, ,, ,, সীতার মত সতী হব।
,, ,, ,, ,, লক্ষণের মত দেওর পাব।
,, ,, ,, ,, দশরথের মত শ্বশুর পাব।
,, ,, ,, ,, কৌশল্যার মত শাশুড়ী পাব।
,, ,, ,, ,, কুন্তীর মত পুত্রবতী হব।
,, ,, ,, ,, দ্রৌপদীর মত রাঁধুণী হব।
,, ,, ,, ,, দুর্গার মত শক্তি পাব।
,, ,, ,, ,, পৃথিবীর মত ভার স'ব।
,, ,, ,, ,, ষষ্ঠীর মত জেঁওজ হব।

(In the next birth, I shall have a husband like Rama, I shall be a Sati like Sita, I shall have a Devara like Lakshman. I shall have a father-in-law like Dasaratha; I shall have a mother-in-law like Kousalya; I shall have sons as Kunti had, I shall be a Cook like Draupati, I shall aquire power like Durga; I shall bear the burden like the earth; I shall nourish the children like Sasthi).

(c) *Verses of Tush Tusli Brata—*

তুষ-তুলসী-কাঁধে ছাতি, মা-বাপ হোক লক্ষপতি।
তুষ্‌লী গো রাই, তুষলী গো মাই
তোমায় পূজে কি বর চাই?
অমরগুরু বাপ চাই, ধন-সাগরে মা চাই,
রাজেশ্বর স্বামী চাই, সভা-আলো জামাই চাই,
সভা-পণ্ডিত ভাই চাই, দরবার শোভা বেটা চাই,
রূপ কৌটা ঝি চাই॥
সীঁথের সিঁদুর দপ্‌দপ্ করে, হাতের নোয়া ঝক্‌ঝক্ করে,
আলনার কাপড় দল্‌মল্ করে, ঘটিবাটি ঝক্‌মক্ করে,
সীঁথের সিঁদুর মরায়ের ধান, ভর-যুবতী এই বর চান॥

(The Umbrella is on the shoulder of Tusli. May my parents be Multi-Millionaire. Oh Tusli, you are my mother, oh Tusli you are my darling, what boon should I beg by worshipping you? I wish my father to be an immortal teacher,—I wish my mother to be an ocean of kindness; I wish a husband to be a king; I wish a son-in-law who adorns the court; I wish a brother who is a court-Pandit; I wish a son who brightens the court; I wish a daughter who is a handsome girl. Vermillion on my head twinkles; bangles in hands sparkle; garments beautifies my hangers,

untensils give lustre ; vermillion on my head brings paddy in the granery and I am a youthful lady who wants these boons).

(d) *Verses of Sandhyamani Brata*—

সন্ধ্যামণি কনক-তারা সন্ধ্যামণি জলের ঝারা।
সন্ধ্যামণি করে কে সাত ভায়ের বোন যে।
আলো ধানের কল পুতে জন্ম যেন যায় এয়োতে।

(The evening lamp is a golden star, and a water-fall ; who does worship the evening lamp ? A sister of seven brothers does worship ; she transplants the seedlings of unboiled paddy. Let she attain the birth of a woman who is living with her husband).

(e) *Verses of Bhanjo Brata*—

ভাঁজো লো কল্‌কলানী, মাটির লো সরা।
ভাঁজোর গলায় আমরা দেব পঞ্চফুলের মালা॥
এক কলসী গঙ্গাজল এক কলসী ঘি।
বছরান্তে একবার ভাঁজো নাচবো নাতো কি।
পূর্ণিমার চাঁদ হেরে তেঁতুল হল বঙ্ক।
গড়ের গুগলি বলে আমি হব শঙ্খ॥
ওগো ভাঁজো তুমি কিসের গরব কর।
আইবুড়ো বেটাছেলের বিয়ে দিতে নার॥

(Bhanjo represents himself as an earthen pail of water and as an earthen dish which give a murmuring noise, as of running water. We shall adorn Bhanjo with a garland of five flowers. There is a pitcher of sacred water of the Ganges—, there is a pitcher of Ghee, then why should I not dance before Bhanjo once a year ? The Tamarind becomes a curve by noticing the fullmoon ; a snail of a circular tank wishes to be a conch-shell. Oh, Bhanjo, what are you proud of ? Can't you give a bachelor in marriage ?

(f) *Verses of Senjuti Brata*—out of 52 Slokas, we are citing here only 10 slokas on co-wife.

১। ময়না ময়না, ময়না সতীন যেন হয়না।
(1) Mayna, Mayna, I do not wish to have a co-wife.

২। কুলগাছটি ঝেঁকড়ী, সতীন মাগী খেঁকড়ী।
(2) The Jujube-tree is well branched with leaves ; the co-wife is quarrelsome.

৩। থুতকুড়ি থুতকুড়ি সতীন মাগী আঁটকুড়ি।
(3) Fie on the co-wife ; for she is sterile.

৪। বেড়ী বেড়ী বেড়ী, সতীন মাগী চেড়ি।

(4) The co-wife should be in chains for she is a maid-servant.

৫। হাতা হাতা হাতা, খা সতীনের মাথা।

(5) I devour the head of the co-wife.

৬। উদ্‌বেরালী খুদখা, স্বামী রেখে সতীন খা।

(6) Let the otter eat broken rice; let the otter eat the co-wife exempting my husband.

৭। পাখী পাখী পাখী, সতীন মাগী মরতে গেছে ছাদে উঠে দেখি।

(7) Bird, bird, bird, I see from the roof of house my co-wife who wants to comunit suicide.

৮। তালগাছেতে বাবুই বাসা, সতীন মরে দেখতে খাসা।

(8) A tailor-bird makes its nest in the palm-tree; I shall be highly glad if the co-wife dies.

৯। বঁটি বঁটি বঁটি, সতীনের শ্রাদ্ধে কুট্‌নো কুটি।

(9) I shall cut vegetables with the Dao (a kind of weapon) on the Sraddha ceremony of my co-wife.

১০। অশথতলায় বসত করি, সতীন কেটে আলতা পরি।

(10) I reside under the shadow of the Asvath tree, I kill my co-wife and paint my feet with her blood.

It is to be remembered that out of seven days, only five days are alloted to observe festivales for the particular gods i.e. Monday for Siva, Twesday for Mangal Chandhi, Thursday for Laskhmi, Friday for craving sons, and Saturday to satisfy the Saturn. Sometimes it is noticed that the pious Bengalee women are paying penalty to the gods; In the summer days, in the scorching sun, they are seen to measure stalks (Dandi)—i.e. they lie on belly, stretch both arms forward and draw a line with the stalk; and from the line drawn again they lie on belly, stretch both arms forward and draw a line with the stalk. This start from their own houses and goes on until they reach the temple of their desired gods. In many cases the women themselves offer their mental worship. Sasthi Devi (female diety) is worshipped by the mother for the good of their children. Lakshmi (goddess of wealth) and Alakshmi (goddess of ill-luck) are also worshipped by the mothers. The ingredients of worship of Alkshmi are the following—cutting hairs, paddy-husks, raw leaves of jute plants and seeds of cotton. After worshipping, they bid farewell to the goddess of ill-luck by beating the winnowing basket with the stick of sugar-cane. The worship of Alakshmi is observed outside the boundary of the house. The women-worshippers utter the following :—

আয় লক্ষ্মী ঘরে আয়। অলক্ষ্মী দূর যায়॥

(Come in oh, Goddess of wealth, come in ; Goddess of ill-luck has been driven out).

Alpana :

Besides, womenfolk of Bengal also observe various types of religious rites, they decorate the floor or yard of the house with the paste of rice, specially in Lakshmi, Tara, Senjuti, Bhaduli, Basudhara, etc. brata rites. The painted earthern pots of Lakshmi and Manasa attract the minds of witty persons. During marriage or *Annaprasan* ceremonies they paint wooden seats also. The women of Bengal, specially the women of a certain caste of Nadia and Bankura districts make various types of little earthen dolls. This not only gives pleasure to the children of Bengal, but it improves the pecuniary condition of the artisan-community.

Spining wheel :

Once it was the duty of the Benalee women to spin thread in Charka. They recited the verse with the rattling sound of Charka,—

চরকা আমার ভাতার পুত, চরকা আমার নাতি।

চরকার দৌলতে মোর দুয়ারে বাঁধা হাতী॥

(Charka is my husband, my son and my grandson. Through the grace of Charka I feel no want of money).

Kantha :

In Kantha art, the Bengalee women can claim credit. They embroider different types of flowers, creepers, leaves, conches, peacocks. boats etc. in Kanthas. The women of Tantubai caste embroider the Kanthas in imitation of thee coloured borders of cloths. Once the use of embrodered Kanthas was in vogue in the districts of Jessore, Khulna, Barisal, 24 Parganas etc. We do not now see the excellent embroidered Kanthas which we saw in our boyhood.

Dance and Music :

Bhadu and *Tusu* are two popular Bratas performed by the women of West Bengal. *Bhadu Brata* is observed on the first day of the month of Bradra and continues till the last day of the same month. *Tusu* begines on the last day of the month of Agrahayan and lasts till the last day of month of Pous. Both Tushu and Bhadu are the miniature female dieties. On the particular day of worship, the women taking these deities in their lap begin to dance and to sing. The

women of West Bengal sing Jaoya with accompaniment of dance Jaoya resembles *Jhumur* of the Santhals.

শুন দাদা শুনগো তুমর বহুর গুণ গো
বাসি ভাতে নেঙ্গা হাতে বাট্যা দিল নুন গো ॥

(Hear me, oh dear brother, hear me and listen to your wife's virtue also; she serves salt to stale rice with her left hand ;)

In Jalpaiguri area the women, perform dance and music holding the image of *Tista Buri* or of *Lakahmi* in hand from door to door. The rythyms of dance is praiseworthy. It somewhat resembles "scating on Ice". Some are of opinion that the Santhali dance, especially, the Tibetan dance has influenced it to a certain extent. The women-dancers revolve in dancing mood as if they are threshing the corn with the winnowing basket. Symphony of music and rhythms of dance synchronise. In East Bengal, the women dance and sing when there is deficiency of shower. In the hilly regions of Jalpaiguri, dance and music are performed in honour of Lord Baruna (water God). Such type of musical performance is called "*Huduma*". On the new-moon night, daughters and daughters-in-law of many quarters assemble in a field and put off their night garments completely. Being complete-naked they form a team of dancers and singers. After that, these women-dancers with disabled hairs pass through village singing merrily. They step in the courtyard of every house. When the tune of their music touches the male's ears, the males go out of their house immediately, all the lights are put out. In such a way, they go round the village. When the darkness of the night becomes thinner, the dancers, again assemble in the field where they put off their night costumes. Then they put on their dresses and start for their own houses. It is indecent or inelegant to us but they regard it as a popular custom. Now we are citing here a specimen of "Huduma" song :—

হিলহিলাছে কমরটা মোর,
শিরশিরাছে গাও।
কোন্ ঠেকানা গেলে এত
হুদমার দেখা পাও।
পাটানিখান পড়েছে খসিয়া,
আইসেকরে হুদমা দেওয়া
তোর বাড়ে মুই আছোরে বসিয়া।

ডিং সল সল কমরটা,
তাতে নাই মোর ভাতারটা,
কর কি মুই কাই বা কয়,
কোণ্ঠে গেলে দেখা হয়,
দেখা হলে দেহাটা জুড়ায়।

(My waist is swinging—my body is aching; where should I go to meet Hudma (water god). My silken cloth is slipped away; Oh, *Huduma*, please appear before me to display witticism with me—I have been waiting for you. My waist is aching, for my husband is not with me. Now what shall I do or whom shall I tell my saddest tale? Where should I go to meet him? If he comes, my body cools).

Friendship:

Like males, the females are eager to make homogeneous friendship. One addresses the other as 'Sakhi' or Sai'; sometimes as 'Bel Phul' 'Gangajal' 'Sagarjal' etc. At the time of taking bath into the sacred water of the Ganges they make friendship of Gangajal.

At the time of worshipping many earthly gods, especially of *Goddess Manasa* (the snake-Goddess) and of *Dharma Thakur* the women perform the ceremoney of *Sayla*. Perhaps the word 'Sayla' takes its origin from 'Sahela', a Hindi word, which signifies the meaning of Sakhi or Sai (friend). The Jagaran Gan (a lyric sung in one day of night) of Dharma Thakur or the Bhasan Gan of Manasa (consignment of the image of a dicty to the waters) is an inseparable part of *Sayla* ceremony. With the end of the music, both males and females exchange garlanding. The males adorn their male friends with wreaths of flowers and the females garland their female friends. The Sayla has got individual lyrics of its own. Foreheads of the participants are dotted with sandal; betel leaves and fried rice are given in hand, then the recitation of lyrics goes on—

উপরে খই নীচে খই। তোমায় আমায় জন্মের সই॥
সই একবার সই বল। ঘরে গিয়ে যেন দেখি ভাল॥

(Fried rice is on the above, fried rice is below; you are a friend of mine since birth. Oh friend, address me once as a friend; I shall see in my house everything all right).

There is a vivid description of it in Sitaram Das's Dharmamangal which was composed in the last decade of the 17th century.

কমলা দেয়াশী কহে শুন সর্বজন। শুন শুন কহিগো সয়লার বিবরণ॥
ঘরে ঘরে জানান পাঠায় গুয়াপান। পুষ্পমাল্য সন্দেশ গুবাক শুক্লধান॥
যার যত পুত্র কন্যা সমান বুঝিবে। তার ঘরে ধান্য গুয়া পান পাঠাইবে॥
যুবকে যুবকে আর শিশুতে শিশুতে। পুত্রবানে পুত্রবানে বন্ধ্যাতে বন্ধ্যাতে॥
শনিবার দিন কালি করিবে সয়লা। জড় হইয়া থাকিবে গো যতেক অবলা॥

(Co-worshipper Kamala (Manasa) addresses all—"Here me, I narrate the tale of Sayala you all send betel leaves, betel nuts, garland of flowers, sweetmeets and unboild paddy to them who have equal number of children; the youth should send these articles to the youth, the babies should send to the babies; fathers of sons should send these to fathers of sons; sterile women should send these to the sterile women. Tomorrow shall be Saturday. You all should assemble in the courtyard of worship and observe the festival of Sayla).

Next day

সয়লা পাতান সভে দেবী দেন বিধি। পুরিয় খ'য়ের পাথি তাহে রাখে দধি॥
গাএ দেয় হরিদ্রা মাথায় আমলকি। কোলাকুলি কর্যা বলে এ জন্মের সখি॥
মালা বদল করিয়া চাপিয়া দেন কোল। জয়জয় হুলাহুলি পড়ে উভরোল॥

(The Goddess prescribes the direction—all women make friends; they keep cards on the pot containing fried rice; they rub their body with the wet condiments of turmeric and wet their hairs with Amloki oil; they embrace each other by addressing 'Sakhi'; they exchange garlands and embrace each other; then they all shout).

A piece of Manasa Mangal, a musical composition of Sitaram Das is known as *'Sayla Pala'*.

Holding of Bangles of Conch-shell and Vemillion:

Bangles of conch-shell in hands and dots of vermillion of the foreheads are the signs of the Hindu married women. In olden days the married women used to put on ornamented bangles. Many a lyrics have been composed by the village-poets regarding the putting on the bangles of women. These lyrics can be heard in different parts of Bengal. The Patuas wander from one part to another by singing the mayesty of putting on the bangles of Goddes Durga. Rameswar Chakraborty's 'Sivayan' has given a vivid picture of it. When Gouri (Goddess Durga) was egar to put on the bangles of conch-shell Lord Siva, her husband, said to her the following—

ভাত নাই ভবনে ভর্তার ভাগ্য বাঁকা মূল খাটি মরে তার মাগ মাগে শাঁখা॥

(While the husband is living from hand to mouth, his wife wants to put on the bangle of conch-shell).

Gouri became enraged and went to her father's house. Lord Siva followed her and started for father-in-law's house in disguise of a bangle-seller. Bimala, a maid-servant of Gouri, met Lord Siva on the way and invited him to Gouri's father's house. She told him that Gouri had expressed her desire to put on the bangles of conch-shell. Then Lord Siva said—

ভাতার ভিখারী তার ভুঞ্জিবার নাই। দিব্য শঙ্খ দিতে বল দুঃখিনীর ঠাঁই॥

(Her husband is a street-beggar ; do you request me to give her the costly bangles ?)

Ultimately Lord Siva was agreed to give Gouri the bangles. Gouri feel pains while she was putting on the bangles of conch-shell. She was weeping. What Lord Siva was dong then ?

উরুতের উপরে উমার হস্ত রাখি। সহলে সহলে মলে তেলে জলে মাখি॥
একগাছি অনেক যতনে হল পার। তিনগাছি আছে ত্রিভুবন অন্ধকার॥
দ'লে দ'লে টিপটাপ করে দণ্ডদ্বয়। একগাছি গেল আর দুটিগাছি রয়॥
সেই দুটিগাছি শঙ্খ পরিবার কালে। ভাসিলেন ভগবতী লোচনের জলে॥

(Lord Siva placed Uma's (Durga) arm upon his thigh—he massaged her arms gently with water and oil. After much struggle, a piece of bangle was lifted on the wrist. Moreover, there were three piece of bangles too. Lord Siva massaged her arms vigorously and a piece of bangle was lifted on the wrist. Still there were two piece of bangles. Uma shed tears while she was putting on the rest of the two)

Widow :

In the Hindu Society the widowhood is a great curse. The widows have to put off all their garments and ornaments which they used to put on while their husbands were alive. But with the death of their beloved, they wear simple costumes. Sometimes they had to suffer much at the cruel hands of their societies. Till the 1st decade of 19th century the custom of concremation was in practice in Bengal. Though it was undesirable the women had to accompany their deceased husband in the funeral pyre. Various sensational events of concremation have been focussed in the then leading reviews and books. In 1799, an incident of concremation took place at Bagnapara village near Nadia. Anantarama, a Kulin Brahmin had more than one hundred wives. After his death only 37 (thirty seven) wives threw themselves into the funeral fire of their deceased husband. The age of the eldest wife was 40 (forty) while the youngest was of 16 (sixteen) summers. It is interesting to note that, many of them had no chance even to embrace

their husband for once. The Brihaddharma Puran has approved the concremation. we are citing here one or two doggeral lyrics relating to concremation—

কার আগুনে কেবা মরে, আমি জাতে কলু।

মা আমার কী পুণ্যবতী, বলছে, দে উলু॥

(Somebody's fire burns somebody I am an oil woman by caste, my mother is a lucy woman, who tells to sound 'ulu ulu').

The village poets cast a side-look of the widows—

একে রাঁড়ের ভাত। তায় মুসুর ডালের কাথ॥

(It is the dinner of a widow, add to it the essence of Musur).

সাত রাঁড় এক এয়ো : যার কাছে যাই সে বলে আমার মত হয়ো॥

(Seven widow and one lady with her husband living whomsoever I go, she wishes me to share her fate).

Poluted Character :

"Charyapada" is the first specimen of Bengali Literature. We have seen there one or two women who failed to maintain the sanctity of their character.

দিবসই বহুড়ী কাড়ই ডড়ে ভাএ। রাতি ভইলে কামরু যায়॥

(By the daytime, the daughter-in-law in fear pretends that she has got purity of her character : at night she goes out to meet her lover).

"Gopichander Gan" is a popular ballad of Bengal as well as of India. Gopichandra suspected his mother, Maynamati, for the impurity of her character. So many lyrics, relating to characteerless women have come down orally. In olden days only the heroes became the master of the society and enjoyed much properties. So a proverbs goes on

নৌকা, ঘোড়া নারী ; যে চড়ে তারি॥

(The man, who rides on the boat and on horse-back and enjoys women is the master of these three). Compared with this-- যার লাঠি, তার মাটি। (Might is right).

Sometimes a few married women seem to be characterless. They pretended that she had purity and sanctity of their character ; but in fact, they were loose-charactered.

বার করলাম ব্রত করলাম, স্বর্গে দিলাম বাতি।

যুবা কালে রঙ্গ করে বৃদ্ধাকালে সতী॥

(I performed the day in honour of gods ; I observed fasting, I kindled the lamp in the blue ; I cut serious joke in my youth and in my old age I have become a woman of pure character).

সব জন্তু মোট বয় ধরা পড়েছে গাধা। সব নারী সতী সাজে ধরা পড়েছে রাধা ॥

(All animals are beasts of burden ; the ass wants to be escaped, but is caught raid handed, similarly all women pretend to be women of good character, but Radha cannot escape).

It is a known fact that some daughter-in-law by throwing dust to eyes of the members of her own family meet their lovers secretly to enjoy something valuable.

দেখে যা পাড়ার লোক চোরের দাগাদারি। যে ঘরেতে রাঙা বউ সেই ঘরেতে চুরি।

(The neighbours are invited to see the cleverness of the theif enters into the room where an excusitively beautiful daughter-in-law dwells).

ঐ কাজের কাজী আমি পাকলো মাথার কেশ।

বউ মাগী বলে, ভাসে পানাতে সন্দেশ ॥

(Now I am old, but in my youth I did this deed. You can not go escape by saying that the *Sandesh is* floating on the Pistia).

Sometime some characterless women of the villages instigate others to accomplish this of sort of illegal deed.

Conclusion :

Though Hindu scriptures treat woman as goddess, still society of Bengal suggests their cautious movements in every sphere of life. Bashfulness of woman is desirable no doubt, but a long veil is not at all a good sign. There is every possibility of going astray for a grown-up daughter in her parent's house—she may get evil counsel through different discussions in bathing ghat. A married woman loses her honour if she stays in her parent's place for a long time. A housewife too is condemned in failure of her managing household affairs, even if she be too aged. The widows are not in good book of the society. A barren woman is a disgrace to the community. In fine, a woman has to pass through different tests throughtout her whole life.

মরবে মেয়ে উড়বে ছাই। তবে মেয়ের গুণ গাই।

(Not until a woman dies and her ashes scattered away, she should be praised her virtue).

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PIYUSHKANTI MAHAPATRA

JAINA WOMEN AND THEIR FOLK-LIFE THROUGH AGES

The position and status of the Jaina women have been discussed here in this essay. The basis of this study is early Jaina literature, epigraphs and oral-traditional materials.

JAINISM and Jaina religion is of archaic origin. In the hoary past the religious and social order were established firmly and predominated in a major part of India. The antiquity of Jaina religion is connected with that of its founder, Rishabhadeva, the first Tirthankara and a hoary antiquity is assigned to the Jaina religion. The human statuettes and the figures carved on the seals found in the excavations at Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa in Indus Valley seem to resemble the Jaina Tirthankara,[1] as and specially the first Tirthankara Lord Rishabha.[2]

From the earlist period down to the modern time the Jaina community has a major contribution to the Indian religion, philosophy, logic, ethics, astronomy, mathematics, literature, art and architechture. In the early period Jainism can be traced all over India, from Bengal to Sind and from Kasmir to Travancore-Cochin, but in later times it was chiefly concentrated in the region of Gujarat, Maharashtra, parts of Rajasthan, Andhra, Mysore and in the central part of the Peninsula. In the ancient and medieval period the Jainas held high ranks in the society, such as, Dewans, ministers, generals etc. Now-a-days, the Jainas belong to traders, merchants and commercial community. For this reason, they are to some extent urbanised.

Jainism had received the royal patronage during the ancient and medieval periods in different parts of the country. The Jaina monks paid greater attention to the layfolk, and in Jainism the layman was a definite member of the religious and social order. They were encouraged to undertake for a limited period, the life of monk, and also to lead a family life, and their human virtues were honoured. The Jaina temples of Mount Abu and Sravana Belgola are testimonies of the great wealth and piety of medieval Jaina laymen.[3]

The important aspect of Jainism is that, it is inflexible conservative, rigid and it holds its original institutions and doctrines, practically unaltered upto the modern times with a tradition of over two thousand years. There were no fundamental changes and developments in Jaina doctrine. The evolution of the faith has not made through

changes. New philosophy and ritualistic patterns had not been infused in the Jaina faith. It strictly adheres to the religious principles formulated in ancient times. For spiritual Nirvana, Jainism gave emphasis on leaving the worldly attachment, being monk and leading ascetic life. The ascetics have controlled the religious life of the lay disciples and the lay disciples also kept a strict control over the character of the ascetics. For breach of the rules of conduct they might be excommunicated.[4] Therefore, there was a close relation between the monks and the layfolk. The layfolk "were not regarded as outsiders, or only as friends and patrons of the Order" and "It cannot be doubted that this close union between laymen and monks brought about by the similarity of their religious duties, differing not in kind, but in degree, had enabled Jainism to avoid fundamental changes within, and to resist dangers from outside for more than two thousand years . . . ."[5]

Women are the integral part of the society. In Jaina community women are regarded in the high esteem. In Jain society both of men and women enjoy the same status. The layfolk, both men and women, have the rights to perform religious rites. The Jaina Samgha is constituted not only by monks and nuns but by both laymen and women as well.[6] The life of the layman would be guided by the religious teacher or the monk. There are three groups of vows for the layfolk : (1) the small vows (*anu-vvaya*), (2) the additional vows (*guna-vvaya*), and (3) the strengthening vow (*sikkha-vvaya*).[7]

Religious Order :

Parsvanatha, the 23rd Tirthankara flourished towards the end of the nineth century B. C., i.e. 250 years before Mahavira. He preached the four great vows, *Ahimsa* (non-injury), *Satya* (truth), *Asteya* (abstinence from stealing), and *Aparigraha* (non-attachment to worldly things). He gave the religious position of the women in high order and same as that of men. He divided the followers of Jaina religion in four categories : (1) *Yatis* or *Sadhus* or *Munis*, the male ascetics, (2) *Arjikas* or *Sadhvis*, the female ascetics, (3) *Sravakas*, the male laity, and (4) *Sravikas*, the female laity. Thus, in the highest religious order, Jaina women held the position in the ancient times. It comprised both monks and nuns as both laymen and women.[8]

It is believed in the Jaina discipline that a woman could attain the highest religious state, and womanhood is no bar to salvation. Malli, being a woman, rose to the status of a Tirthankara. There is also a large number of Jaina women, who distinguished themselves as teachers and preachers.[9] Jainism gave complete freedom to the women

to enter ascetic order. The royal personalities, members of the elite and women belonging to the common run of society could enter into the ascetic order.[10] The female ascetics or the *Sadhvis* followed the five great vows, (the fifth vow is *Brahmacharya,* introduced by Mahavira) in a very strict manner. During the time of Neminatha, the 22nd Tirthankara about 3,000 women ascetics realised the goal of imancipation. The number was increased during the days of Parsvanatha, the 23rd Tirthankara, to the extent of about 20,000 whereas only 1,000 male ascetics realised the goal at that time. During the time of Mahavira, it is stated that, there were 14,000 *Yatis,* but 36,000 *Sadhvis* and 1,59,000 *Sravakas,* but 3,18,000 *Sravikas.*[11]

The information regarding the lady teachers are mentioned in the epigraphs found in Madras. They had ladies as their teachers as well as for pupil, but men also had their share in both the roles. The lady teachers are named as *Kuratti,* which is the feminine form of Guru in Tamil. Many names of lady teachers have been referred to in different epigraphs.[12] The lady teachers had a wide circle of female disciples. They held high positions as the heads of hermitages and monasteries. They had the roles of teachers and preceptors guiding the religious activities of the creed.[13]

Women of the rank :

Jaina women of all spheres of society, from the queens to the commoner did their best for the cause of the religion, welfare of the sociey and philanthropic activities for the people. They figured themselves as champions of the Jina *dharma,* especially the royalty, the nobility, and the houses of ministers and generals. The integrity, patriotism and intelligence of the women of rank were held in high esteem. Jakaladevi, the queen of Virkramaditya VI, was renowned for her beauty and attainments in fine arts. She was an ardent follower of Jaina faith, and in spite of her husband's positive disapproval persisted in her religious practices and finally she influenced her husband and established a Jaina temple. The detailed information are given in an epigraph.[14] The Jaina temple of *Anesejjeya-basadi* was erected by Kunkumamahadevi, sister of Chaluqya Vijayaditya, as stated in a later eleventh century inscription and confirmed by a contemporary copper plate charter of the king.[15]

Kandacchi, the wife of Parama Gula of Nirgunda family was a champion of Jaina *dharma* and she established a Jain temple. The royal grant was made for the purpose in 776 A. D.[16] Attimabbe, daughter of General Mallappa, and the wife of Nagadeva and the mother of Padu-

yela Taila was a renowned lady. She was an ideal devotee. She initiated 1,000 copies of Ponna's Santipurana at her own expense, and 1,500 images of gold and jewels.[17] Jakkisundari caused a basadi to be built in the famous Kakambal. The devoted lady Pambabbe performed penance for thirty years and observed the great five vows. The royal ladies were respected for their devotion and patronage of the Jaina *dharma*. Pocabbarasi established a *basadi* and presented land in the prescribed manner. Cattaladevi, the queen of the Pallava king Kaduvetti constructed several Jaina temples at Pombucchapura. She had also other benevolent works at her credit, the construction of temples, *basadies,* tanks, wells, water-sheds, sacred bathing places, *satras,* groves, distribution of food, medicine and shelter, and dissemination of knowledge.[18] There are several epigraphical evidences about the pious work of Pampadevi, a Santara princess, who was an ardent devotee, performed all the vows and constructed Jaina temples.[19]

The Jaina women had considerable contribution in political and administrative activities also. In the inscription No. 2 found in a temple at Hunasi-Hadagali the name of queen Chandaladevi is mentioned. She was administering several villages in the province of Alande.[20] She is usually referred to by the epithets, *Nritya-Vidhadhari* and *Abhinava-Saraswati* or *Abhinava-Sarada.* The expressions were not merely formal. She was well-educated and accomplished in music, dancing and other fine arts. She was one of the senior queens of Vikramaditya VI and is known from a large number of epigraphs. In epigraphs and inscriptions references are made about the noble ladies who were able and efficient administrators. Jakkiyabbe, wife of Sattarasa Nagarjuna was appointed as the administrator of the Nagarakhand 70 after the death of her husband.

The women held a high position in Jaina literature. Abhinava Pampa was a great poetess of her time in the early twelvth century. Many references are made about the poetess Kanti, a contemporary of Abhinava Pampa in the inscriptions. A Jaina lady Avvaiyara was one of the most admired amongst the Tamil poets.[21]

Social and Folk-life

From the ancient times the Jainas held high position and status in the society as ministers, generals, councillors, traders, merchants with sound economic background. They were defenders of their own faith. Therefore, there is hardly any influence of other religious and social orders over Jaina faith. They adhere to the original institutions and doctrines in a conservative way through couples of centuries.

Although they have been sub-divided in sects and sub-sects in later period, most of the doctrines are unaltered and inflexible. It has a considerable impact on the social life of the Jainas.

In their religious life the Jaina women enjoyed of previleges with male counterparts. It manifests also in their social life. They took part in the political and administrative activities from the ancient times. There are textual evidences that the Jaina women appeared in public without restrictions. They could go out to visit their friends and relations. They went freely to shrines for worship and assembled on the occasion of various social and religious festivals.

The first Tirthankara Lord Rishabhadeva realised the importance of imparting education to the women and the religious leaders followed the same principle. According to Jaina texts a woman is expected to learn 64 arts like dancing, music, painting, domestic science etc. Many women used to enter the teaching profession in order to disseminate the learning. Jayanti, a daughter of the king of Kausambi was famous for her learning in Jaina philosophy and scholarship, and she discussed with Mahavira the metaphysical questions when the latter first visited Kausambi.[22]

Marriage, according to Jaina thought, has no religious implication. It is considered as a social act. Therefore, both the parties enjoy the same previleges in the family life as well as in the social order. The institution of marriage is controlled by the local customs and not on the direction of holy scriptures. The scriptures state the ideals of marriage and the proper selection regarding marriage. There are several marriage rites and rituals to be performed in the different sects of the Jainas, but these are regulated by the local customs. Men and women enjoy the same status to lead a happy family life and to be integral part of the society. But in certain unavoidable cases one of the party may dissolve the wedlock under specific condition.[23] It is applicable in both sides in the same way.

The upper class of the Jaina population is mostly urbanised and sophisticated. But the ordinary people living in villages lead their own way of life in the traditional way. Their social life, matrimonial relations, rites and rituals, manners and customs, ceremonies and festivals, legends, fairy tales, moral tales, methods of worship, superstitions and beliefs, dresses and ornaments etc. are different. Folk elements can be traced in their way of life. Some of the communities may be mentioned in this respect having their folk-life. Setavala community usually belongs to the weavers, cloth merchants and tailors. They have many rural customs, rites and rituals of their own. The

Chaturtha community is mainly agriculturist. Except some of the land-holders, they do all sorts of field work with their own hands with the help of their women. They are working husbandmen and they make use of every advantage of soil and situation. The workmen take a leading part in their occupation and social life. The Panchama community belongs to agriculturists, petty merchants and traders dealing in jewellery, cotton, cloth and grain. The Bogaras or Kasaras mainly deal in brass and copper vessels, ornaments and other materials. In these communities the womenfolk take a major role in occupational as well as social life.

Jainas, particularly the women, lay great stress on the practice of austerities and the common method is the observance of fast. In different ceremonies and festivals performed around the calender the women observe fast for self-purification and adherance to the rites and rituals. There are various kinds of ceremonies and festivals observed by the Jainas. The fast of *Paryushana* is the most sacred. It lasts for eight to ten days. The last day of this ceremony is known as *Ananta-chaturdasi* or *Samvatsari,* and is considered as particularly sacred, and is observed by performing special ceremonies. It is observed in the dark half of *Sravana* (July-August). Some of the festivals[24] are *Siddhachakra Puja* or the saint-wheel worship performed twice in a year in *Chaitra* (March-April) and *Asvina* (Sept-Oct.) which lastes for nine days; *Ashtanhika* is performed thrice a year in the months of *Kartika* (Oct.-Nov.), *Phalguna* (Feb.-March) and *Ashadha* (June-July); *Sruta-Panchami* is observed in the month of *Jyestha* (May-June) or in *Kartika* (Oct.-Nov.). Dipavali is most popular and celebrated festival of the Jainas. The women observe many folk rites and rituals to perform it. There are other folk festivals observed by the women which have no religious significance. The local festivals and ceremonies, with the rites and rituals peculiar to them are performed by the women which are not prescribed by the holy scriptures.

In their folk-life the Jaina women have the superstitions and beliefs. They believe in supernatural power and beings who can influence the fate of individuals as well as groups. It is believed that the spirits can extend happiness to or inflict sorrow on the ordinary people. The Jainas also believe in magic and charm and that these magical practices can pacify evil spirits, ghosts, witches and other supernatural phenomena. They believe in family spirit also. The Jaina women think that children suffer from diseases due to the influence of evil spirits. The women who die with unfulfilled desires might be evil spirit after their death. They, sometimes, attack children

with chronic diseases. Then the parents take a vow that if the children be cured, they will place the image of the spirit, which is known as *Jakhin*, with their family deibies and will worship. The *Jakhin* worship is common among the Jainas in certain regions. The Jainas of all classes believe in enchanter, persons with magical power and soothsayer and consult them for illness and other misfortune of individuals in certain regions. Jaina priests are believed to be the curers of illness caused by spirit possession. The priest applies various methods. The victim is given *tirtha* or holy water to drink. Then the priest rubs *angara* or ash on the brow of the victim. He advises to worship *Jakhin*. He ties the *taita* or charmed casket round the arm or neck of the sick person. Then he starts ceremonies to please the dieties. Failing all methods, the victim is transferred to a holy place called *Stavanidhi*, and the victim or his relatives worship *Brahmanidhi* until the victim is cured. The ghosts are worshipped by the Jainas in some regions in South India. The Jainas believe that a woman may be attacked by spirit possession when she is just bathed and her complexion is brighter by using turmeric or her hair is loose, or when she is well-dressed, or goes to a lonely place near a river or well, particularly at noon or sunset. It is believed by the Jaina women that some persons possess evil eyes and they may cause illness to others by the evil powers. It may be counteracted by black or bitter materials. Therefore, the women use black thread, when using a new jewellery, and they mark the check with black smeat, if a beautiful child is taken out. A lemon is tied in the dress of a bride at the wedding ceremony, so that something sour may safeguard the sweetness of her lot.

The Jaina women have various kinds of belief and they keep them in their mind and do accordingly. They worship serpents to please the spirits of the ancetors on the fifth day of *Sravana* (July-August). They submit offerings as advised by priests in the days of cholera and other fatal diseases. They take vows before *Sitala Mata*, the goddess of small pox during the epidemic of small pox. The women go to the temples promise offerings if only a son may be born to them.[25] They believe that the dreams can foretell the good or bad future and can suggest happy and unhappy events. They believe in auspicious and inauspicious signs and move accordingly, particularly at the time of journey. They believe in black art, dreadful magic, malignant spirit and supernatural power of certain persons with which they can do harm to others.

The Jaina women have to observe certain rituals for the welfare of the family, particularly in the period of pregnancy. The ritual of

Priti is performed in the third month after the conception. Worship is performed by lady members of the family and arrangement of music is done to keep the pregnant woman delightful. The rituals of *Supriti* are same as *Priti*, and performed in the fifth month after conception. *Dhriti* is performed in the seventh month, for the sake of the child to be born, in the same way. *Moda* consists in the writings of the primary letters on the body of the pregnant woman in the ninth month. The ritual of *Priyodbhava* is performed with worship at the birth of a child.

The Jainas are minority in Indian population. They kept themselves away from the Buddhists for historical reasons. Therefore, they have been influenced by the local people, particularly the Hindus. Thus, there has been social intercourse and interrelationship has been established with them. This has been more akin, so far as folk-life is concerned. The superstitions, beliefs, practices, methods of worship, festivals and ceremonies, rites and rituals, customs and manners, occupations, dresses and ornaments, legends and myths are the same in the same in the folk-life of the Jaina women with others.

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NOTES AND NEWS

Notes and News on folklore and its neighbouring subjects are invited for consideration in this section.

FIELD WORK AT ZAL WAR AT SAURASHTRA by P. CHANDERVAKER

First Trip :

Prof. Pushker Chandervaker is a noted regional folklorist and is well-known as a writer and an educationist. He has studied different tribal people of Gujarat and is at present researching on the folklore of Zalawar and the ruler of Zala dynasty in Saurashtra. The University Grants Commission, New Delhi has awarded a sum of Rs. 2000.00 to Prof. Chandervaker for research on folklore of Surashtra and is also getting research-grants from Saurastra University for the study of of folktale of Zalawar. We publish below from his note book certain materials which, we believe, would be of some value and importance.

Zalawar is maiden land for the historians and folklorists because feudalistic traditions and folk customs still survive there. This researcher has got a duha from villages around Dhrangadhra which runs thus :

हलवट हटपटी, ने कोंट कपाणी;
सीथे न मूई सलखणी, के गई भवद भराणी ॥

This duha is addressed to a she-horse, which died in Bharad, a village is Zalawad, near Kutch desert.

There is a folktale on this duha. Topography of land, many times, is being given in many Sorathi duhas, so the researcher wanted to see villages like Methan, Bharad, Dhed Charadi, Sitapur, Chandrasar, etc.

The researcher left Dhrangadhra on October 20, '67 for Pidhada, where he encamped and desired to visit nearing villages.

On his way to Pidhada, visited Chandasara which has some historical importance. There is also a legend with temple of Rama, standing on the bank of the tank. Originally Pithada belonged to the Thakor Saheb of Lakhtar. Zamindars of Pidhada are Zalawas. It is a small village of 1200 men and women. Mrs. Gandabhai Mochi, Pasa Pagi, Jambha Jamindar, Hargovind Sheth etc. were contacted. The village-folk are very rich in idioms of the dialect. The collector has noted down quite a number of them. Mr. Pasa Pagi is an occultist. He narrated an old game played on Dhuleti day. This play was very popular when feudal lords were enjoying their rights as village-owners.

Then the researcher visited Methan and also visited the relics of the old fort of Methan and the temple of Chaturbhuj Vishnu. Mr. Sahajanand

Swami had often visited this village. This village has many memorial stones on the western bank of the big tank. There is also a small temple of Hanuman, which is erected in the memory of Sahajananda Swami.

There is also a legend on the visit of Sahajananda Swami at Methan which has been noted. Mr. Chaturbhai C. Soni is a local historian. On the first day, he was busy, so he could not accompany the researcher to places of historical importance. In this village, a small piece of cloth presented to Zala Kakabhai is preserved by his descendents in the village. Here an information was received in which it was known that Shri Bachubhai Gadhavi should be contacted at Wadhwan City in connection with the local history of Zalas of Methan and Nadoda Rajputs. Then the ceremony of Matano Mandavo was also narrated and was taken down. Pidhado has a big water tank which has a mound-island in the middle, which has also a legend of its own. This legend is recorded.

This trip was arranged for three days from October 20-22, 1967. It has been felt that it is necessary to make a further trip to the places such as Dedh Charadi which bear a tale of the local history and Sitapur for rich store of manuscripts which lie in the possession of the Mohanta Saheb of the temple.

Second Trip :

In order to investigate the spot for research in folklore of Gohilwar the researcher visited Palitana next. Palitana is a town at the foot of the Shatrunjaya Hills. It is an old town of the Jain temples and a place of pilgrimage for Jainas. The History of the Satrunjaya Hills is given in the History of Gujarat by Prof. M. S. Commissariat. (Vol. II, A. N. XXII, page No. 252). He wanted to contact a few *charans* there. Rajkavi of the then Palitana State is a *charan* and a poet-laureate. The area abounds in *Charanas* of Maru clan as well as Parajia clan. The field worker has not yet come in contact of the latter clan *Charans*. They are also the torch-bearers of *charani* literature in Gohilwad and so he has a keen desire to see and get acquainted with Parajia Charans. Mr. Nandlal G. Chhatbar has collected manuscripts, antiquities, idols and old coins, locks of old Gujarat etc. He wanted to contact Mr. Devidan Kanubhai Kunchala who is famous for supplying data to research workers. But he was absent then. If was gathered that he would be available at village Sevalia. As a result, the worker had to leave the place who would visit the area when he finds it necessary.

* * * * *

The Saurastra University at Rajkot will introduce two papers of Gujarati folklore for M.A. in Gujarati from June next. There will also be a diploma course in the Gujarati language and literature from that time Professor Pushkar Chandervakar will take the charge of this department as a Reader in Folklore and Literature from 1-6-1969.

BOOK REVIEWS

[Books on folklore and its neighbouring subjects in English and other Indian languages are reviewed in Folklore. Two copies of each title are required for review. But reviews of all books sent cannot be guaranteed. No criticism of book-reviews and notices is entertained—Ed.]

STONE WARES : A Handicraft Survey Monograph, Census of India 1961 series, Vol. XVI, West Bengal & Sikkim, Part VII A (III)
By Dipankar Sen and Sukumar Sinha. Published by the Manager of Publications, Government of India, Delhi, 1967. Price Rs. 8/50.

This volume is the third of the series of monographs on Handicrafts in West Bengal which the Government of India proposes to bring out as a part of their census programmes of 1961, Though this particular handicraft is conspicuously localised in Binpur Police Station of Midnapur District in West Bengal, there is a pressing demand of its products in the different parts of the State. It is interesting to note that in the face of consistent external influences, these stoneware-craftsmen have not deviated from their traditional arts.

This monograph has given a lucid account of both the crafts and the persons responsible in manufacturing them. Details of the environment under which this particular industry have been thriving, the raw materials and equipments used for their manufacture and the various processes of their production techniques have been discussed here. Precise details of the day-to-day activities of the craftsmen have also been studied in order to find out their economic behaviour, social structure, physical and mental qualities, occupational hazards and other demographic phenomenon. The problems recently faced by the non-practising artisans have also been outlined. A majority of the artisans are engaged in this occupation for a large number of years. Any shift in their occupational pattern of these traditional craftsmen, as noticed in case of some other industries, has not been identified here, though quite a number have adopted subsidiary occupations. This is a positive sign of stabilisation of this handicraft industry in the soils of western part of Midanapur district. In the face of rapid competitions from more sophisticated household items, it is difficult to forecast a bright and hopeful future of stonewares in West Bengal.

The monograph contains a considerable amount of detail, which gives only a board picture rather than a specialised intensive study. Otherwise, it is a useful handbook to the field scientists.

Department of Geography
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Bireswar Banerjee

EDITORIAL

We wish our contributors, readers, well-wishers and advertisers a very happy and prosperous New Year and assure them all that the burden of duties reposed on us for socio-economic-historico-cultural-behavioural studies will be faithfully served as in the previous years. On the eve of our entrance into the Fourteenth Years of existence this responsibility has much increased. We are aware of our historical role in the building of a batch of scientific workers in the field of folklorology, its neighbouring subjects like anthropology, sociology, traditional literature, tribal studies and the like and in our mission for an indefatigable champion of folklore study. We speak and stand for unity of Indian people inspite of a great many diversity.

The passed year was marked by so many events in the political field in the State from where the journal is published, New triumphs in the spheres of economy and culture and new advances in improving the life and living of the people will surely be extented this year on the completion of the mini-general election when one can expect a stable government either dominated by the United Front or by its opponants in those States like West Bengal, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and the Nagaland. After all, it is only a stable government that can bring peace and prosperity and these are inevitable for such studies as ours.

There are people who criticise us and our works because in these days of scientific, industrial and economic development we speak of the past, oral traditional and cultural aspect instead of talking about bread, shelter and other material things, which are bare necessities for living. Their criticism can be foiled only if all those who cherish oral traditional-behavioural studies act in unison. This is an embodiment of the will of the journal that forge ahead and win under the banner of socio-economic-historico studies. This resolve is vividly manifest in the attitude of our workers giving full support to their researchers in our and allied subjects. Thus, we say, long live the efforts and endeavours of folklorists of the world and let them be united in one voice and in a world organisation.

It is undoubtely a pleasure to note that the different universities, advanced study centres, and institutes are gradually swelling in number who are providing incentives and encouragements for undertaking researches, surveys, etc. on our subjects too. Here again, we have our responsibilities. Scholars and researchers must be provided with institutional materials. Only an effective team-work can assure the responsibilities for such a task and our efforts will be to unite them in one organisation. Ours is a great forum which is being utilised by the scholars and researchers of this subject for years and we will always try to encourage young scholars. Of course, our effort will surely be to maintain the standard as usual and here we solicit fullest support and co-operation from everybody and assure our best of services to all.

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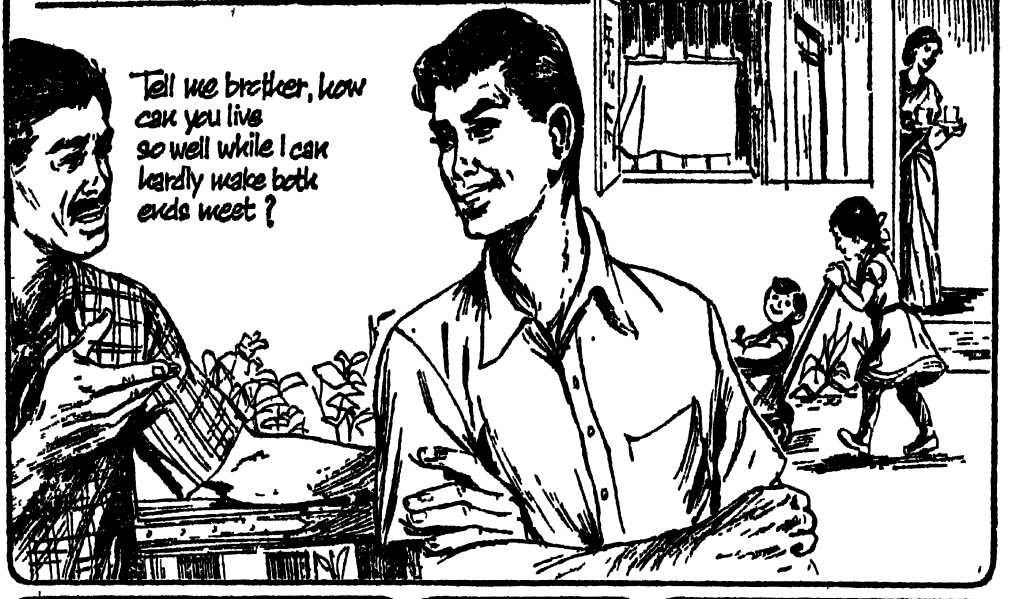
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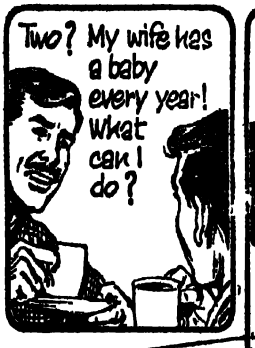


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SHIBNARAYAN KABIRAJ

WOMEN IN THE DOMESTIC RITES AND BELIEFS OF THE HINDUS AND THE MUSLIMS

Numerous materials have already been collected to ascertain women's position in folk society. The subject that has dealt with is the key to an extended series embracing the role of folk women of both the Hindus and the Muslims in India.

THE present paper is compiled from personal observations and library works. The women studied here belong to Muzaffarpur and its neighbouring areas of Bihar, Bakarganj district of East Pakistan and Nadia district of West Bengal. The rites and beliefs may be identitical to other places also which is the characteristic of folklore. The field works were carried on in March-April 1950 in Bakarganj and October-November 1964 in Nadia.

It is well-known that the Hindu girls in order to obtain good husbands, frequently worship Gods and perform different rituals (*Vratas*). This is, of course, not common among the Muslims but nevertheless the marriageable girls pray to Allah for better match to lead a happy and peaceful married life. The conjugal life, naturally, starts from marriage. The husband, generally, earns and the wife manages the household works. So she is often called as the Home Minister of the Family Government.*

Necessery to mention that the basic objective of this study is to describe, analyse and interpret the position of the folk-women. It is, however, concerned not with a single community but it serves to bring women of both the communities, the Hindus and the Muslims, from a purely folkloristic consideration. In one way this may contribute significantly to the understanding of the position of the women as depicted in folklore, in another, it may provide an appropriate context in which

*The number of the working women is not very small in the present-day India. They manage the household work simultaneously perform office or other duties. Thus they are called multipurpose women.

to analyse and understand cultural and intracultural processes of both the society.

Although in all socio-religious activities, husband's opinion dominate still wife's view is not altogether neglected in a good family. An excellent wife gives honest council and bore the impatience of her husband without a murmur. In the hour of necessity, she cherished her husband as a mother does for her child. An honest wife is as faithful as a shadow to the body. It is the folk conception. The net result of the marriage is to bear children to fulfil social and religious obligations. Sexual relations and bearing of children are the greatest source of pleasure in the earth and the ultimate fulfilment of a woman is motherhood. Even then it is disfavoured that a woman should give birth to children very frequently. If it happens the neighbouring women remark, "what a woman she is breeding like a pig". This is definitely an unkind remark, but it portrays the feeling of the folk people for natural family planning and this is more effective than what our national Government is trying to do to that effect.

2. The social position of a woman varies according to the status of her husband and husband's family. As soon as a girl gets womanhood she is vested with certain restrictions and taboos. She is not allowed to move freely and is forbidden to establish sexual relation with anybody but her husband after marriage. A wife also has to observe certain strict moral code.

3. The knowledge of menstuation and sex life usually comes to a girl from elder sister, mother, neighbouring girls or the nearest companions who have attained maturity. The girl understand that her youth bloomed when her monthly course starts. During menstuation period a girl is considered as unclean and when the period is over she takes bath to become clean. There are different rites and taboos among different castes, communities and sects of the Hindus and Muslims on mensturation. It is almost common that after becoming clean she can undertake the household duties and religious activities. But due to the Industrial society and women's work outside her house for livlihood and economic stability as well as for growing sophistication a sophistocated woman cannot observe taboos so strictly. Although, she cannot be free from certain practice inspite of her work outside the house and becoming sophisticated. The following is an interesting saying about the date of the first mensturation

রবিতে বিধবা হয়, সোমে পতিব্রতা। মঙ্গলেতে বেশ্যা, বুধে সৌভাগ্য সংযুক্তা॥
বৃহস্পতিবারে পতি লক্ষ্মীযুক্তা হয়। শুক্রবারে বহুপুত্র চিরজীবী রয়॥

শনিবারে বন্ধ্যা হয় জ্যোতিষের মতে। অতয়েব লিখি যাহা প্রায়শ্চিত্ত তাতে॥
গো কাঞ্চন ভূমি কিংবা ধান্য দিবে দান। দোষ শান্তি হয ইথে এইত বিধান॥

It means, if the first mensturation date is Sunday, the mensturating woman would be widow; if it is Monday, she will be a faithful wife; if it is Tuesday, she will be a prostitute; if it is Wednesday, she will be a lucky one; if it is Thursday; she will have a prosperous husband; if it is Friday, all her sons will live long; and if it is Saturday, she will be barren. In order to avoid all such evil things a woman should donate cow, money, land or paddy to others by which she can get rid of these unwanted things.

Menstural impurity lasts for three days. The Muslim women, during this period, do their household works, but engage in no religious ceremonies. So do the Hindu working women. But the housewives or non-working girls usually follow the tradition. There appear to be no special observances among the orthodox Muslims, but among the Muslims of the lower grade, who are mostly Hindu extraction, follow usual rules enforced among the Hindus of the same rank in life. During mensturation impurity period a Hindu woman is not permitted to touch any person, nor any cooked article of food or drink to be used by others, nor clothes, nor cookery vessels. If earthen pots, used for water or other liquids, happen to be touched, they are out of the house as useless; if clothes, they are rendered pure by a dip in or a sprinkling of water; if metallic vessels, they are made pure by exposure to fire and cleansing.

A woman, while under the above contamination, is not allowed to touch a child of another. If she does, it is a common belief that the child will become sickly, and if the woman becomes pregnant after this touch, the child, it is said, will go on becoming thinner and thinner till it dies. To prevent such a calamity the child is made to ride a black bear, and its hair, with the aid of certain charms, is converted into an amulet which is hung to the neck or an arm.

The idea of menstural pollution is common all over the world. The ground of the seclusion according to Frazer (Golden Bough, II, 238) is "the deeply engraved deed which primitive man unversally entertains for menstruous blood". "The object of secluding women ot mensturation is to neutralize the dangerous influence which are supposed to emanate from them at such times" (ibid, 241). Here a question may be raised whether the women themselves suffer if they violate the taboo? The modern women are forced to violate these taboos and it has not yet been calculated whether this break do any harm to them physically. An interesting study may be projected to that effect. Frazer informs us that the "Zulu girls believe that they

would shrivel to skeletons if the sun were to shine on them at puberty, and in some Brazilian tribes the girls think that a transgression of the ruled would entail cores on the neck and throat" (ibid, 242).

4. The woman commonly speak of pregnancy as *pet* (stomach). The counting of the date starts one month earlier of the stoppage of mensturation. In rare occasion, a woman is pregnant along with her monthly course. In that case, it is believed, either miscarriage will occur or the dead baby will take its birth. But if such a baby alive, he will be a genious in his lifetime. If there is a miscarrage the women call it "*pet gir gya*" in Hindi and *santan nasto hayegache* in Bengali.

The woman conceals the first pregnancy from stranger women, as much as possible, for the first four or five month, till the sign of pregnancy becomes obvious. They do this partly to prevent from natural modesty. During the mature days the wife addressing her husband says,

> **Oh Raja, an acute and undearable pain has come in my womb**

In the Hindu joint family it is the mother-in-law who always take upperhand with the daughters-in-law and they had to abide by their commands and orders even if that are unjustified. But due to gradual change of values and modern thinking a great many the daughters-in-law are not willing to obey the unreasonable commands or orders of their mothers-in-law. They try to avoid them. This has resulted family split. Thus joint family is getting divided into small units. The mothers-in-law are so much unwanted that even at the time of delivery when the delivering woman need help of some nearest relatives and the husband is eager for taking the help of his mother and says,

> **"Oh Gouri, if you so desire, your mother-in-law might be called for your help and assistance**

But the delivering woman replies,

> **My lord, the mother-in-law is not wanted"**

During preganancy, Muslim woman of all classes rich or poor without distinction, refrain applying *missi* (black powder) to the teeth or wearing *churi* (thin bangles) or parting their nails.

Obviously a varieties of rites are observed both by the Hindus and by the Muslims. These rites and practices varies from caste to caste and community to community. It is common for a Hindu woman

to perform *Sad* ceremony in the seventh month. There are many songs on this rite. In fifth, seventh, or ninth month these ceremonies take place. In certain places the eigth month of pregnancy is called 'an-gina' or uncounted the reason being that in the belief of the folk people the number 'eight' is of ill omen or unlucky. During the *Sad* ceremony the woman's lap is filled with fruit by her friends and relatives. She also takes a boy on her lap. It is suggestive.

It is interesting to note that at the time of delivery a small pit is dug in the ground near where the woman is lying-in. After the child is born it is dosed with a concotion known as *ajwain* (dill) treacle and guggal, which is known as *Janamganth* or birth knot. The most of the upper and middle class families of northern India observe *janamganth* custom. Then there is *Saligirah* custom. When a year has passed from the day of birth, the mother makes a very long cord of cotton and at one end she makes a knot to record the first year; and after this, in due order, at the end of each twelve months, another knot is made and this is known as *Salgirah* according to Muslim custom.

After the birth it is the women of the house who wash the baby and are entitled to a present known as *dudh dhulai* or *pistan dhulai.* The woman is washed for the first time on the sixth day (*chhati*) and the friends are feasted. She is washed again after the tenth day.

The birth of a girl is marked with subdued atmosphere and displeasure. Almost no function is observed if the baby is not a male. Even today a girl is considered to be a liability. The dowry system has cast gloom over the family. It is so deeprooted that even inspite of a very great propaganda against this evil practice it exists in our modern society too, where the form of dowry has changed from cash to kind. Now the father or the gurdians of the bridegroom demand car, and cash money for providing advanced study, to their wards or certain other categorical purposes. Dowry is still in existence with a modified form.

In order to facilitate delivery the following charm is chanted by the Muslim women of Muzaffarpur area,

Likh kar chapri sir par dhari
Nikal para ya nikal pari

The couplet is written on an earthen plate and the plate is put on the head of lying-in-woman. She was then delivered a boy or a girl. It is believed that this practice ensures safe delivery.

Here is a Hindu prediction about the forthcoming baby :

Rabi, mangal, guru putra utpanna
Som sukra budh, jana kanya
Bar sanichar bahai jo soai
Gaugh jai ke hinjea hai

It means, a woman bringsforth a male child if she becomes pregnant on Sunday, Tuesday or Thursday. A girl, if the days be Monday, Wednesday or Friday. If Saturday is the date of preganancy either abortion take place or the boy is born an eunuch.

Then there is another counting which runs as follows,

গ্রাম গর্ভিণী ফুলে যুতা।
তিন দিয়ে হর পুতা॥
একে সুত দুয়ে সুতা।
শূন্য হলে গর্ভ মিথ্যা॥

It means that the words of the names of the village and the words of the name of the pregnant woman together with the words of the name of a flower which the pregnant woman may utter to be added, then the total words are to be divided by number 3. If the remainder is 1, the expected child will be a son; if the remainder is 2, a daughter; and if the result is zero, abortion will take place.

In the poor and middle classes, women continue during pregnancy to do their ordinary work and eat the same food as before. Among the rich class the pregnant women get special treatment.

After *Chhati* or the sixth day of birth the baby is allowed to suckle the breast of mother. Before that, the milk of the mother remain much condensed and is harmful for baby's digestion. A folk sayings may be referred to in this connection. In order to discredit the rival or the contestants often one remarks to other that 'I have not taken the "Chhathi-milk", so I am not going to tolerate you. To say anybody as drunker of 'Chhati-milk' means to abuse him with a crude word.

For point of information it may be noted here that whenever there is an eclipse of the sun or moon, it is the practice among all sorts of people and classes of the pregnant woman to lie motionless, at full length, on her bed or sleeping-rug, from the beginning of the eclipse untill it is end. During this time they will neither eat nor drink. On the passing of the eclipse, the woman bathes and gives away in charity the clothes she was wearing, together with such grain as she may have had by her in the house. In the Muslim religious law all Muslim, men and women, are directed to pray during an eclipse and give alms afterwards. The additional practice described may have had its origin in the orders of physicians.

In Sayyad, Sheikh, and Mughal families generally, and also in some Pathan families, there are fixed customs, which their women consider obligatory.

5. Some details of the Muslim rite 'Rasam' may be given under:

A day is fixed by the Sayyads after the lapse of four months and

five days; by most Sheikhs after sevenmonths. And by many Mughals and Pathans after ninth month of birth. It takes place only in the case of a woman big with child for the first time after her marriage and is equivalent to the *Sad* ceremony of the Hindus. A feast is given in the house, to which all the female relations are invited. Women folksingers who are popularly known as *Domni* sing and play, and the master of the house, according to his ability, provides presents both in kind and cash and betel-leaf (*pan*) for the whole party. The pregnant woman then is bathed, dressed in her best, and adorned with all her jewels. She is, as it were, made afresh into a bride. And at the time her hair is being plaited. All the clothes that she puts on during this time come from her father's house. He sends the following articles (i) two suits of clothes; (ii) one pair of shoes; (iii) *missi* (powder for the teeth), oil, and *surma* (powder for eyelids) (iv) combs as many as required; (v) one silver drinking cup; (vi) one silver nail-holder, (vii) flat cakes cooked in butter i.e. *puri;* and (viii) some wheat-flour. The reason for sending the silver nail-holder and the silver cup is that the pregnant woman may cut her nails on that day and place the partings in the cup. The two articles are then given, as a reward, to the barbar women, who performs the operation. The person who acts as tire-woman to the pregnant woman must have the highest degree of *Suhag-bhag* (martial felicity). In the Hindi tongue, as employed by women, *Suhagin,* means a woman who has a husband, while *bhag* means fortunate or prosperous. The woman must be one that her husband excessively loves her and this is known as *accha suhang bhag* (good martial fortune)

In Bengal there are certain marriage rites which are known as *'Sohagjal', 'Sahagmapa', 'Sahagmaga'* etc. and all these have been very efficiently discussed by Kamini Kumar Ray in his "Laukik Savdokosh," Calcutta, 1968 in Chapter Six where the author treated many such rites and rituals.

When the ninth months have passed and the pains of childbirth become perceptible, clothes, sweetmeats and fruits are despatched from the woman's father's house. When the pains become more frequent and the time of delivery in nigh, the midwife, whose office is hereditary, together with two or three of the women most nearly related, are sent for. Accordingly, the midwife comes with some sweetmeats and *Khurma* (dried dates) and *dhan ki khilen* (parched unhusked rice). When the women have assembled, the pregnant woman is placed in a seperate house, with the midwife and one or two of the nearest relations among the women. Then, by way of good omen, the *Dah* and scarf (*do-pattah*), which have come from the father's house, are given

to the pregnant woman to wear, while in her lap are put two balls and some cash, which also have come from her father's house. The *Dah* is taken at once from her lap, and with the *do-pattah* (scarp) is given to the *Dahaniya*, by way of present. In women's language *Dayanyan* are women of the same descent as the husband, or of the same descent as his father or grandfather. The custom is one intended as a good omen, expressing the hope that the woman's lap may always have a child in it and be filled with the world's goods. When the birth begins, the ordinary clothes are removed from her body, but she is not left naked. A sheet of pink in colour, has been sent beforehand from her father's house; it is of great size. This sheet is wrapped round her to prevent exposure. No man, neither stranger nor husband nor brother, is allowed to be present. When the child has been safely delivered the midwife makes known the fact by saying, if it is a son, *farzand mubarik ho* (congratulation for a son); if it is a daughter she announces it by *mubarik bad* (may it be a blessing). As soon as the men and the women hear these words, they exchange salutations and congratulations. Then the midwife cuts the navel-string with a knife. This act, in the women's dialect is called *anwal nal.* Most of the better classes, at this point, give the midwife money according to their ability. Among the Sayyads, this money is given only to Dahaniyas. After this the child is washed in warm water and *besam* (a very fine powdered pulse from the *channa* or gram pea). The midwife does the washing. The water is placed in an earthen vessel into which the people of the house, also the relations and neighbours, throw money for the midwife according to their means. Among the Sheikhs, this practice is most frequently observed. Besides this money the clothes worn by the mother, also the bed clothes (*toshak*), are given to the midwife. When the child has been bathed, his uncle or father or brother, or in their absence any other man, recites the call to prayer (*azan*) into the child's right ear. Into his left ear they say the *ikamat.* The *ikamat* is what is said upon the commencement of assembling. Literarly, *ikamat* means stopping, resting, being intent.

Some of the songs sung by the *Domnis* as referred to above are given below; there are many other songs to the same effect.

1. *Per men pajniyan lala rum-jhum khele;*
   Subh ghari subh din, we din janum,
   Jis ghari bala "Aman" kah pukari,
   Aur "Baba" kah pukare, aur "Chachha" kah pukare

FREE TRANSLATION

On the tree tops baby plays merily;

Of all hours and days that a day I reckon,
The hour that boy calls out "Mama"
Calls out "Papa," calls out uncle.

2. *Yun bola mera ahola Raja, yun bola*
Hun, hun, bola mera majlaya Raja, yun, bola,
Raja aphni aman ku bulauge ya nahin
Wah to baron ki rit batawengi
Angana men dhol bajwawengi
Aur Raja apni sas-saliyan ku bulaugee ya nahin ?
Wah kurta, topi jawengi
Wah hansli, karre lawengi
.Wah yun bola hun hun

FREE TRANSLATION

My pretty prince, said "yun", said "yun"
"Hun Hun" said my courtly prince, thus spoke he
Will His Lordship call Mother or Not ?
She will teach him grownup ways,
She will have the drums beaten in the countyard
Will not His Lordship call mother-in-law and sister-in-law ?
They will bring him a coat and a cap
They will bring neck-rings and anklets,
Thus it was he cried "Hun Hun"

3. *Mera lalana, re, khelan ku aya,*
Mera lanana ke yah tin khilone,
Chakwa, chakwi, latware, khelan, ku aya

FREE TRANSLATION

My dear Lalana has come to play
My dear one has three playthings,
The *chakwa*, and its mate and the *Latwari* have come to play

4. *Hans hans ke, dudhwa pile,*
Kanhiya, lore tumhen dun
Agar Chandan ka palna banaun
Resham ki pachdori
Kanhiya, lore tumhen dun

FREE TRANSLATION

With many smiles drink your milk
My boy, I will give you a plaything,
A toy of sandal wood
A cord of five silken strands,
My boy, I will give you a plaything

5. *Ajah man laga ho piron se*
Meri jacha, tujhe kya kya bhawe ?
Ari, alak thal ka limwa bhawe
Tere Jethna lawega tor
Ari alak dal ka amwa bhawe
Tere Chhota Diwara lawega tor ;
Ghe ki pakki puri, ghewar khand men,
Teri jithani lawega paka

FREE TRANSLATION

My mind is strangely moved by pains
My heavy one, what is happening to thee ?
Alas, the lemons cluster on the branches,
The elder brother-in-law will break off and bring them
Alas, the mangoes hang heavy on the branches
Thy younger brother-in-law will break off and bring them
Cakes cooked in butter, sweets done in sugar
Thy elder brother-in-law will break off and bring them

6. As is done by the Hindus so Muslims do on the first day—the child is made to suck honey-water. A piece of the clean, soft cloth being taken, it is rolled up like a taper and steeped in the said honey water. It is then laid on the child's lips so that he may suck it. This is called *ghunte*. Shakespear, 1757 defines this as a mixture of a loose, spice, and borax given to new born children. On the second day, the *ghunte* is given in the same fashion, but to the water a decoration of *ajwain* (coriander seed) and *sem* (flat sweetmeat) is added. On the third day, the woman's breasts are bathed with buffalo or cow's milk and the juice of green grass ; after which the child is given the breast. At this point a present is made to the *Dahaniyas*. When a son is born in a Muslim family, men and women, both inside and outside the house, manifest every sign of joy and rejoicing. To entertain the men, singing-women (*Tawaij*) and players of music (*Dom*) and every kinds of players of instruments, are collected according to the means of the housekeeper. Then follows an entertainment by singers and players (*Tawaij* and *Dom*). Money is distributed to religious mendicants and the poor, as the people of the house may be able to afford. *Gondajhani* is distributed among the women of the brotherhood.

The ceremonies of Chhathi, or the sixth day from delivery, was narrated previously. They were prevalent among the Hindus. By Sayyads on the ninth day, by Sheikhs on the sixth day or seventh day,

by other Mohamoddans on the fourteenth day, following ceremonies are gone through. On the proper day the female relations of all kinds and female acquaintances assemble. *Dom* women are sent for to sing and play. According to the family circumstances, food is made ready and the guests are fed. The mother bathes in warm water. Meanwhile, from her father's house and those of other relations, presents come for the mother and the child. It contains, clothes, gold and silver ornaments, cash, sweetmeats etc. and one *dopattah* or scraf, for each of the household dependents. Then, at night time, the mother takes the child in her arms and comes out of the room in which she was delivered, with a *Koran shariff* on her head and her eyes shut. When she has reached the open air, she opens her eyes and glances seven times toward the sky. While she is out, her bed is not left vacant. Some little boy, a brother or other near relation, is made to lie down on it. When she returns and the boy is told to get off the bed, he demands a present under the name of *Neg-jog*.

The place where the woman is confined is called *zacha- khanah*; in it she remains for forty days, and occupies the same bed. In one corner a large vessel and a wooden frame are placed for necessary purposes. The mother and the child are first bathed on the sixth day, then on the tenth, then on the twentieth or the end of month, or on the forteith day. The purification of the fortieth-day they call the *purachahlah*. Up to the sixth day the midwife is present day and night. After that she remains usually absent and attends on the mother. For all these she gets only her food. Among the Sayyads there is another practice known as the *chahlah* or fortieth day. The mother, after putting on her new clothes, cooks rice with her own hand and, in the room where she has been delivered, recites two short prayers (*rakat*), then eats some of the rice and gives the rest away in small portions. This practice is by way of showing that the woman is now purified.

7. In all classes most women suckle their own children. In a highly-placed family, here and there, there are wet-nurse. This woman is styled as *dudh-pilai*. She receives food at both meals and certain money as cash per month. Generally, the mother suckles the child, she continues to do all her household work. Poor people with small income from land or labour, or trade, or service, suckle their own infants, as a rule. It is the same in families a little better off. In the Mahamoddan religious law it is directed that a male child be suckled for two and a half years, whether the mother or a wet-nurse is concerned. But contrary to this rule, they go on suckling children till they are

three or four years of age. If the child falls ill, the medicine is given to in its mother's milk.

The first time that the giving of milk is stopped, all classes, rich and poor, make rejoicings according to their means, and sweetmeats are distributed. About this age, children's teeth begin to come, and for this also there is festivity. The mode of feeding and sending to sleep, the kinds of toys, and lullabies (which are called *lori*), are various and numerous. One toy is a straight piece of wood, as long as a finger smooth and polished, of which both ends are round like a button (*ghandi*). It is held by the child in its hand, and it sucks it. In short, there are numerous toys.

The *lori*, or nursery songs sung by the mother or the wet-nurse to put the child to sleep. Some of them that are sung among the Muslim community of Muzaffarpur are as follows :

1. *Aji, ri, nindya, tu a kyun na ja*
   Mere bale ki ankhon men ghul mil ja
   "Ati hum, Bibi, main ati hun
   "Do char bali khilati hun.

FREE TRANSLATION

Come, o sleep, why comest thou not ?
Fall gently on my baby's eyes ;
"Coming, my lady, I am coming,
Only four more little ones to feed".

2. *Alah, Alah, Bhai ke dide phuten najarhai ki*
   Bawa tera haft-hazari, nana manassbdar
   Maiya teri sada suhaggan, bachcha barkhurdar

FREE TRANSLATION

Lord, Lord, brother's eyes start from starting.
May father be a "haft-hazari", grandfather, a "mansabdar"
Thy mother always a happy wife her children are prosperous.

3. *Mere hu larwa bhala kyari*
   Apni aman ka jayara, anand kyari
   Apne nana ke dam luta
   Apni dadi ke jayara, anand kayari
   Apni dadi ke dam luta
   Sari randiyon ku panji dila
   Naubat nakkare bajwa

FREE TRANSLATION

Be my child strong and playful
His mother's life and joy.
Light-hearted and playful
Scattering his grannie's wealth,
Giving handfuls, to all the women
Make the drums to beat
The horns to blow

4. *Ari, aao, meri, jachcha,*
Tera alan nigheban;
Sasu awe baron ki rit batawa
Banson se mare, bas kar
Jutiyon se mare, bas kar

FREE TRANSLATION

Come, listen my weary one
Thy family is guarding thee;
Your mother-in-law comes to show the elders' ways,
She beats with bamboos—Hold enough.
She beats with shoes—Hold enough.

In truth, all these practices and songs, whether they be or be not allowable among Hindu women, or sanctioned by their religion, are in the present age getting changed even among the Muslims.

It is to be pointed out in this connection that whether the awakening of socio-political and economic consciousness has created a conflict between their traditional domestic duties and their duty towards society is a question to be considered by the social scientists. They will have to solve the dilemma, if a woman engages herself in public work, does she neglect her children or her household work? In reply to this Mahatma Gandhi said through an article in *Harijan* on 8.6.1940 that "more often than not a woman's time is taken up, not by the performance of essential domestic duties, but in catering for the egoistic pleasure of her lord and master for her own vanities. To me this domestic slavery of women is a symbol of our barbarism. In my opinion the slavery of the kitchen is a remnant of barbarism mainly. It is high time that our womankind was freed from this incubs. Domestic work ought not to take the whole of a woman's time". In another article in the same periodical Gandhiji said again, "It is a tragedy that generally speaking our girls are not taught the duties of motherhood. But if married life is a religious duty, motherhood must be too. To be an ideal mother is no easy task. The procreation of

children has to be undertaken with a full sense of responsibility. The mother should know what is her duty from the moment she conceives right up to the child is born. And she who gives intelligent, healthy and well-brought-up children to the country is surely rendering a service when latter grow up they too will be ready to serve."

8. The relation of the mother and the child is extremely sweet. So the mother should be able to devote her wholetime to the up-bringing of the child and, therefore, she should not have frequent issues. After the birth of a child a mother is to observe certain practices. She does not wear red or yellow clothes because it may attract her husband for sexual intercourse off and on, until the child is atleast six years old. The following song depicts the picture. Here the mother addressing the son said :

Your mother must not eat brinjal and pumkin
Oh, son as you are young and of tender age
Into the streets and lanes your mother must not peep
On the husband's cot your mother must not sleep
Red and yellow clothes your mother must not wear

This suggest that a folk woman practices certain self-imposed restrictions for the up-bringing of her child. So inspite of her sons insistance, she is explaning why she should not do all that what the child wants from the mother. This speaks of the role of the woman folk to keep the family planning as well as her motherly affection.

9. It is necessery to remember the position of a barren woman. A barren woman is known as *Bondhya*. She is not allowed to join in any auspicious ceremonies. Even the nearest relatives, avoid them to see their faces in the morning or at the time of commencing a journey to any place as it is thought to be inauspicious. Nobody including the husbands do show any sympathy to them. The following ballad speaks of the condition of a barren woman,

My mother-in-law calls me barren
Sisters-in-law call me Brajabasin
Oh, God, the person who married me
Also turns me out of home

Being tired the barren woman goes to forest to sacrifice her life when

A tigress comes out of the bushes and asks
Oh, woman tell me what is the wrong with you ?
Why do you lament ?

The woman replies,

"My mother-in-law calls me barren,
My sisters-in-law call me Brajabasin
My husband turned me out
Oh, tigress, if you devour me
I can get rid of pains and sorrows

But the tigress also refused to devour in the following words

Oh woman go back home
I will not devour a barren woman
If I do so, I will also be barren.

Getting refused by the tigress the barren woman, in search of a snake, went to a hole from where a she-snake appeared and wanted to know the cause of sadness of the woman. The woman said the same thing to the she-snake when she also refused to devour her. Following is the language of the she-snake.

Oh, woman if I bite you
I will become barren like you

The woman then went to her mother. Looking at the daughter the mother felt sad for the wretched condition of her daughter. She said,

Oh daughter, what is the trouble with you
Why you are looking so purturbed and sad ?

The woman said the story of ill-luck to her mother and wanted a shelter. Even the mother refused and said

Oh, daughter, go back to your husband's home
If I keep you in the house
My daughter-in-law will be barren

The barren woman has now totally exhausted. Again she came to the forrest. There she prayed to the earth

Oh mother earth, kindly give me a shelter anywhere
I am being refused by all due to my barrenness
Oh mother earth, please do as I pray or clear off my barrenness

The mother earth replied

Oh woman go back to your husband's place
If I give you a shelter, I will also be barren like you

In this way losing all her faith in life the barren woman wanted to sacrifice herself by drowning. She came to the Ganges and said

Oh mother Ganges give me a little shelter
Oh brush out my barrenness

The Ganges being pitied on her said

Oh woman do not sacrifice yourself
Take a bathe in the Ganges and worship the Sun
You will get a son

This ballad speaks of the efforts that a barren woman made for having a child. Here an interesting point is also to be noted. Sun is being depicted as the God of childbirth. According to Hindu philosophy it is Sasthi, who is the Goddess of childbirth.

10. From all these a common reader may get an image of the womanfolk of Bengal Presidency and Bihar. Needless to mention, owing to change of values, in many cases, these taboos and customs have been loosened but conservatism among the orthodox Hindus and Muslims are still there. Some rites and customs may have also shorten to some families due to economic factors, shortage of time and other problems. The practice which were possible to observe in a joint family, is not possible to adhere to in splited or smaller families of the present day for obvious reason.

It has been observed here that the position of woman is interlinked with that of the position of man. As a matter of fact, a traditional society is based on differences of castes and creeds. It is difficult to convince masses to demolish their age old loyalty with tradition and so inspite of great effort an issueless or a barren woman is looked down. The idea of helping others in order to help themselves and to work together on the principal of equality has not yet inspire those who consider themselves on some higher ranks of the society. The caste and community division of our society together with some prejudices and practices are retrading the growth of movement and obstructing the economic and social advancement of the country. It is essential, therefore, to find out ways and means through which the society and the country could progress and prosper quickly.

This study reveals that under ordinary condition the womenfolk is dependent on the menfolk because they are economically handicapped. But due to changes of values certain migration are taking place in the society and on the social structure, thinking pattern and observing practices. As the rural-urban migration does not take place at one point of time, it is a gradual and continuous process as that of custom and tradition so is the position of the woman in folk and urban society.

It is remarkable that the more one is to know about the women,

the deeper he gets into her affairs and the more one seems to be delving into the past, the more he feels himself keen. Because women, will never belong to yesterday. They will always belong to the present and the future.

Indian Folklore Society, Calcutta.

NOTE

While compiling this note the contributor gratefully acknowledges that the bulk of materials were grathered from *NIN & Q*, February, 1894, *Indian Folklore*, January, 1966. The articles of Maulavi H. Raza on the 'Muslim Birth Custom' at the instance of W. Crooke, editor, NIN & Q and 'The Fate of a Barren Woman' by Tarakeswar Passad ; 'Desire for a Son' by Indu Prakash Pande ; and 'The Ritual Folk-songs of Meerut of the Western Uttar Pradesh' by Satya Prakash Arya at the instance of Sankar Sen Gupta, editor, 'Indian Folklore' & 'Folklore' respectively were especially consulted besides the materials that were collected from field work on his own accord. Since this is not a scholarly article but simply a descriptive compilation the contributor has refrained from making frequent notes and quotations in the body of the text nor he has attempted to include other details.

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DHIRENDRA DEBNATH

SIKH WOMEN IN RELIGION AND CUSTOMS

Like Buddhism and Jainism, Sikhism has developed out of Hinduism into a distinct religion with belief in ten Gurus, and reverence for the Holy Book 'Guru Granth Sahib.' It stretches the importance of leading a good moral life and, therefore, inculcates moral and domestic virtues.

I

FOR any religion having its origin in a spiritual inspiration, temporal interests find little scope to come to the fore. A new religion cannot also ignore the mass psychology which views anything new with distrust, especially when there are other established orders before it. Sikhism, therefore, with its hold on a small number of followers could not at the outset risk to fritter away on issues other than the spiritual ones and did not attempt primarily any major changes in the immemorial usages and customs of people in the name of religion. The question of social progress was left to the operation of time. Still no religion, worth its name, can remain utterly indifferent to the social conditions of the people obtaining at a particular point of time as it is the human being, a social creature, that is the ultimate concern of all religions. And as no social study is complete and meanigful without woman as a subject of discussion, some references to woman can naturally be found in the religious texts of the Sikhs.

Sikhism, moreover, being the aggregrate of the messages and instructions of the ten successive religious leaders—from Guru Nanak (1469-1539 A. D.) to Guru Gobind Singh (1708 A. D.)—who appeared during the two hundred years of the Indian history of the medieval period bore on it the impress of history. Thus the Sikhs who had been more or less a sect of religious reformers during the first hundred years changed their attitude towards the political issues around them on Guru Arjan's death at the hands of Chandu, a Dewan of Emperor Jehangir, and became a race of warriors during the next hundred years that witnessed the tragic fate of Guru Tegh Bahadur. The transformation was complete during the tenure of Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Guru, who as a real successor of Guru Nanak fired the minds of his countrymen with a new nationality and gave practical effect to the doctrine that the lowest is equal with the highest, in race as in creed, in political rights as in religious hopes.[1]

The Sikh idea of religion was thus influenced by the political exigencies of the hour and became something more practical than

mystic and inspite of the natural limitations suffered by a religion meant for the spiritual emancipation of mankind, and whose base had its roots in the philosophy of love, truth and non-violence, the religion of the Sikhs could respond to the needs of the society and serve the greater interests of humanity. Naturally women found a mention in the religious preachings of the Guru. But to get a comprehensive idea about the Sikh women of the medieval period, the social customs of the land—Sikhism being practically a localised religion—should also be studied as complementary sources.

But before we take up investigation, it is necessary to have a general idea about the position of women in India before the advent of Sikhism. There might be some differences of opinion as to the position of women in the pre-Vedic, the Vedic and the post-Vedic periods. References available may be used either way to support the claims of opposite camps. But the majority view is that the position of the Aryan women was on the whole satisfactory in the early Vedic age[2] and that women had an absolute equality with men in the eye of religion.[3] Whatever might have been the exact position and status of women in the Vedic age, there is no doubt that the position had considerably lowered down in the Moghul India than what it was before.

Women suffered from certain disabilities. Generally they could not attend the public assemblies, participate in religious festivals and rituals, go in for academic pursuits and enjoy economic freedom. In short the women's world was a secluded one, whose boundary was not to be transgressed. Of course, a demarcation cannot by itself be bad or harmful, it all depends on the attitude that governs one's view-point. A well-balanced formula for separation of fields of activities for men and women with codes of mutual respect for each other can usher in a healthy society. But that outlook was lacking and there lay the real danger as women were considered inferior to men though not in theory always but in practice almost eeverywhere. The Biblical saying to the effect that woman was created for man and not man for woman ruled the society. The most despicable thing was that women became victims of inferiority complex and suffered every sort of humiliation without any murmur or protest.

It has been truly said that the standard of a society can better be judged from the position and status accorded to its women. A high society holds its women in high esteem while a degenerated society projects itself by lowering its women down only to cripple its own self.

No wonder therefore that the entire socoal life was then breathing a hellish air. 'Man, fascinated by Maya, were lost in wilderness.

Goodness had no longer any attraction for them. They were burning themselves in egotistic pursuits and had no respect for each other.—life, property and honour were unsafe. Marriage parties were Way-laid and brides forcibly taken away and sold."[4] Such was the order of the day.

It was at this hour that Guru Nanak appeared on the scene. Though it is true that 'in the beginning of the sixteenth century the Hindu mind was no longer stagnant or retrogressive; it had been leavened with Muhammadanism and changed and quickened for a new development"[5] and reformers like Ramananda, Gorakhnath, Vallabh, Chaitanya Dev and Kabir made the work easier for Nanak, still Guru Nanak had a distinct role to play. It was left for him to 'perceive the true principles of reform' and lay the broad foundations for a pragmatic religion, while the other reformers having been impressed with the nothingness of this life gave little thought to the worldly affairs and 'aimed chiefly at emancipation from priestcraft, or from the grossness of idolatry and polytheism.[6] Thus Sikhism, the religion of the Sikhs or disciples, became a way of life with them, not merely a system of philosophy divorced from reality.

II

Guru Nanak could not reconcile himself to accepting the prevailing position of women in society. 'Why should we call her inferior who gives birth to great men?' was his thought provoking question. Perhaps a bit of sarcasm was there when he said: 'It is by woman, the condemned one, that we are conceived and from her that we are born.[7] He would have liked to get an explanation to the contradictory behaviour of man who claiming superiority for himself sought the company of woman—an inferior creature, according to his own estimate. What Guru Nanak asked of all people was to be reasonable enough to give everybody his/her due recognition. In this vein he uttered: 'It is.....she (woman) who keeps the race going..... It is with her that we got established in society. 'The same outlook was shared by Guru Hargobind who perhaps best owed on woman of all times the highest honour by considering her as 'the conscience of man'. This was no mere eulogy or ideation. Actually the Sikh women rose up to this expectation and justified by their deeds the confidence reposed in them. Once the women of Amritsar roused truly their men's conscience when the menfolk incurred the displeasure of Guru Tegh Bahadur by refusing him entry to the Golden Temple. On another occasion[8] when some of the Sikh soldiers renounced their allegiance to

their leader Guru Gobind Singh during the long seige of Anandpur and went back home, their wives closed the doors in their faces and contemptuously asked them to sit at home and look after the household affairs as they (the wives) would have to go to the battlefield with the swords of their husbands in hand. Needless to say that this reproach produced the desired effect.

Like his predecessors, Guru Gobind Singh also held women in high esteem. His address of welcome to his wife Mata Sahib Kaur—'Your coming is opportune. Women sweetens the *Amrit* of life.'—On her arrival on the scene of baptism on the Baisakhi day of 1699 A. D. had left such a deep impression on the big audience which assembled to witness the foundation ceremoney of the Khalsa that even to this day when the Sikhs are baptised, it is announced to them mother of the Khalsa.

Guru Nanak's firm belief that 'nobody is without some worth'[9] found expression in his various enabling measures advocated for women. Religious congregations were thrown open to women who were allowed free participation in all religious and secular observances. To him woman was man's equal in the eye of God and so he desired that she should not suffer from any sort of man-made disabilities. That was why he used in one of his hymns a word 'Iom'[10] different only outwordly from 'om' occurring in the Vedas but which was not to be uttered by women and some other sections of people. The hymns composed by him could be sung by men and women alike and actually women began to take a greater interest in religion from his times. It was through such a woman, named Bibi Amro, singing one day the hymns, that the course of life of Guru Amar Das changed, who had not even then heard of Guru Nanak and his successor Guru Angad.

History records how some Sikh women played important roles in the lives of some of the Guru—Guru Nanak often discussed with her mother Triptaji about God and religion; Guru Amar Das was initiated into Sikhism through Amro Bibi, daughter of Guru Angad; Guru Gobind Singh was brought up by his mother Gujri in the tradition of the House of Guru Nanak.[11] There might have been other unrecorded examples of such influences by women on menfolk. Anyway it can be reasonably inferred on the basis of information available to us that the teachings of the Sikh Gurus as well as their personal dealings paved the way for emancipation of the Sikh women in particular and of womenfolk of the period in general, as no social movement works in isolation. Guru Gobind Singh's role in this regard was too significant to be lost sight of. To him religion had become the living experience of God through the service of humanity—irrespective of

caste, creed or sex. The Sikh women infused with a spirit of dedication and service fought for the Gurus, but what was more important was that they were entrusted by Guru Gobind Singh with the task of imparting education to the nation. Women became partners of their men in the real sense of the term. To quote a critic, "It was mainly the encouragement that the Guru's followers received from womenfolk that made them do and dare so much. Sikh women no more belonged to the weaker sex; they were as brave and selfless as any Akali could be."[13]

The third Sikh Guru, Guru Amar Das who owed his religious career to a woman was a zealous advocate for equality of men and women in the social and religious domains. The custom of *Satee*, prevalent then throughout India, did not find favour with him. He said; they are not *Satees* who burn themselves with their dead husbands. Rather are they *Satees* who die from the mere shock of separation from their husbands.[14] Guru Amar Das like a rational thinker tried to study the psychology of the widowed women practising *Satee* and assigned to it in most cases a motive of display of grief. He said: 'If they appreciate their husbands, they undergo sufficient pain by their death. And if they appreciate not their husbands, why should they be burnt at all?'[15]

His ideal of married life also offered a respectable position to women when he laid emphasis on love as the true basis of conjugal relationship: 'They are not husband and wife who only have a physical contact; rather are they wife and husband who have one spirit in two bodies.' He was also against the *Purdah* system which was then to be found in the royal and other noble families. It is on record that the Guru admonished the Rani of Haripur who had once come to a Sangat (religious assembly) with a veil on.[16]

To know the outlook of a society towards its women the concept of marriage in vogue must be taken into account. We find from the religious texts that the institution of marriage was considered sacrosanct during the middle ages. All the ten acknowledged Sikh Gurus were married and attached great importance to this institution. Sometimes the Gurus on invitation attended the marriage ceremonies. The Holy Granth, the religious text of the Sikhs refers to some customs and practices observed during a marriage.[17] There was a custom that the bridegroom would ask something of his choice of the bride's father. The marriage ceremony was held on an auspicious date and time. The newly married girl wept while going to her husband's place. Married girls generally dressed themselves well, used various kinds of cosmetics and pleased their husbands with sweet words. A devoted wife was

respected in society whereas an unchaste wife was condemned and people did not look well at a widow or an unchaste wife when she was well-dressed. The wife's devotion to her husband has been highly praised by Guru Nanak and others and in many of the hymns, persons devoted to God have been compared with the wives devoted to their husbands.[18] According to the custom of the times, a girl once betrothed must marry her fiance, otherwise her family was lowered in public estimation.[19]

III

By the beginning of the 18th century the Sikh women attained a position of status in society and no doubt the Sikh Gurus had a positive contribution in this sphere. Even a bigot like Qazi Nur Muhammad who came in 1764 in the retinue of Ahmad Shah Abadli to fight against the Sikhs could not but admit some of their good qualities[20] Theft and adultery were then practically non-existent among the Sikhs. Persons guilty of these offences were socially boycotted. To quote the Qazi, 'Even a thief would not rob a woman of her gold and ornaments, may she be a queen or a slave girl. 'A woman whether young or old was addressed as 'Burhiya'—one who has retired from the world. The Sikhs had the simplest food habits and men, women and children ate the same food.' Sweet in any form—sugar, gur, or khand—was a favourite item with them. However on ceremonies like marriage etc. superior food was served.

The Sikhs preferred simple dresses. "The Sikh women wore *Pajamas* called Suthan, made of *susi,* coloured cotton stuff and a *chaddar* worn over the head and shoulders, either coloured in the case of young women, or uncoloured, made of *garha* of *dhotar,* thick or thin cloth according to the seasons (for others). This upper garment when coloured was of dyed cloth or of *phulkari* i.e. worked with silk flowers, or of *Sitari,* another form of silk work ; must women also wore a *kurta* or waist-coat. When going to another village they wore a *ghagra* or petticoat above the trousers, and a *choli* or bodice of coloured cloth.[21] But on the occasion of a wedding or a festival including a fair which was a joy for men and women of all ages to attend, the garments worn were more ostentatious. Jewels were used by women and the social status of a woman was greatly determined by the quality and quantity of jewels possessed by her.

On festive occasions programes of music, singing and dancing were gone through. Dancing was generally performed any social disapprobation.

The violation of sexual chastity was punished with a fine. There was a very interesting custom among the Sikhs. The only mode of punishment for a murder was that the culprit had to give away either a female of his family in marriage to a person of the other party or a plot of land cultivable by a plough (125 bighas) or to pay a fine of Rs. 1,000.[22]

The daily routine of a housewife included all sorts of household works like grinding corn, milking cows and buffaloes, cooking food, fetching water, spinning cotton for home consumption besides helping the husband in his work of the field.[23]

But the Sikhs had never very pleasant times. They were born as if under the shadow of steel helmets. Onslaughts on their territory came now and then, making it impossible for a steady progress of the society. What was achieved by the beginning of the 18th century was not insignificant, but later attacks of the execrable Nadir Shah and his ferocious successor Ahmed Shah brought in their wake anarchy, disintegration and delasement. As a result, the position of women suffered much and morality was the first casualty. 'Each man had his own standard of virtue and whatever a man was able to do with impunity appeared to him right.'[24] None had the slightest pricking of conscionce in seizing the property of the widows and the orphans. Cheating, forgery and unnatural offences were considered good jokes. Woman who was once considered as man's other half assisting him to salvation from temporal as well as spiritual point of view during the Sikh Gurus became now a marketable commodity and rich people filled in their *harems* with rose-limbed slave girls' of the northern hills sold at regular markets of Lohore, Jammu, Delhi and other big cities.[25]

As the plunderers were clever enough for the local people, money and ornaments were not secure though buried under ground. The unscrupulous Govt. officials also utilised this opportunity in filling up their own coffers by forcible seizure of wealth. So people became thriftless and spent lavishly on good food, good dresses and other material comforts. A huge sum of money began to be spent on marriages. Thus simplicity and unostentation which were the characteristics of the Sikhs left them.[26]

This state of affairs continued for some time till the advent of the British power in India and the consequent changes in different fields brought out through education and various legislative enactments. Lastly with the achievement of freedom and subsequent declaration of India as a secular democratic republic professing equality of rights in all spheres of life for all citizens irrespective of caste, creed, religion or

sex, the Sikh women of to-day stand on the same footing with other Indian women.

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N. B. [*All the translations of the hymns have been taken from the book 'Essays in Sikhism' (1944 ed.) by Teja Singh.]

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PURNIMA SINHA

VOCAL MUSIC OF NORTH INDIA: CLASSICAL FORMS AND STYLES

Before discussing the development of the existing forms of North Indian classical music, I shall briefly indicate some of the essential points of similarity and differences between the South and the North Indian music.

Both the systems consider Bharat Muni's *Natya Shastra* as the basic text and also refer to such common texts as *Sangeet Ratnakar* by Sarngadev. The musicians of both North and South consider Sama Veda as the origin of their systems of music. *Saman* chants are still chanted in slightly different ways in North and South India.

Upto around the 14th century there is nothing on textual record to indicate any difference between the North and the South Indian systems. After this period, some musical instruments have been modified in North India and some characteristic forms and styles of music development mainly by the musicians of the courts of different muslim emperors and their feudal chieftains.

From the 15th century onwards, most of the important theoretical texts on music came from South India. In North India on the other hand, there was practically no theoretical texts or attempts at systematisation upto the 19th century. The present forms and styles of South Indian music have been developed by the following musicians: Purandar Das—1484, Khettrya—1600. Around the 18th century South Indian music was very much enriched principally through the composition of Tyagaraja. The other important figures in the development of South Indian music are Muthuswami Dikshitar, Shyama Shastri and Swati Thirunal The difference between North and South Indian music may be presented schematically as follows:

North	*South*
1. Vocal and instrumental music are played separately. The ancient art of drama is practically lost.	1. An in ancient India, drama, dance and instrumental music are often performed together.
2. Word theme in classical music is not very important. *Tana* in vowel is very common.	2. Word theme plays an important role. *Tana* in vowel is not used.

3. There are many *ragas* containing natural and augmented fourth.	3. Natural and augmented fourth never appear together in a *raga*.
4. Different melodic patterns are classified into *Raga* and *Ragini*.	4. Melodic patterns are classified into different *Ragas* but not *Raginis*.
5. More concerned with the free expression of the total vision of the *ragas*, as received through mediation. There is not much conscious attempt to probe into the theoretical basis—tradition is carried through practice. Probably more receptive towards expansion and innovation.	5. Tendency for strict adherence to rigid mathematical structure following the correct sequence of notes according to set formulas and the 72 scale system, in presentation of *ragas*.
6. Rhythmic structure is said to be simpler.	6. Rhythmic structure is said to be more complex compared to that of North India.
7. Music is developed mostly under the patronage of kings.	7. Music is centered more around temples.
8. The Different *Gharanas* or schools of music are very secretive.	8. Probably less so.
9. The exponents of music may even be illiterate, but execution is of very high standard.	9. Exponents are generally great scholars, more concerned with the theory, but execution is comparatively weak.

The distinction that is most apparant to a layman is very frequent use of *Kampita* variety of *Gamaka* (which forms an integral part of the *raga* structure) in South Indian music. In North Indian music such *Gamakas* are only occasionally used as embellishment.

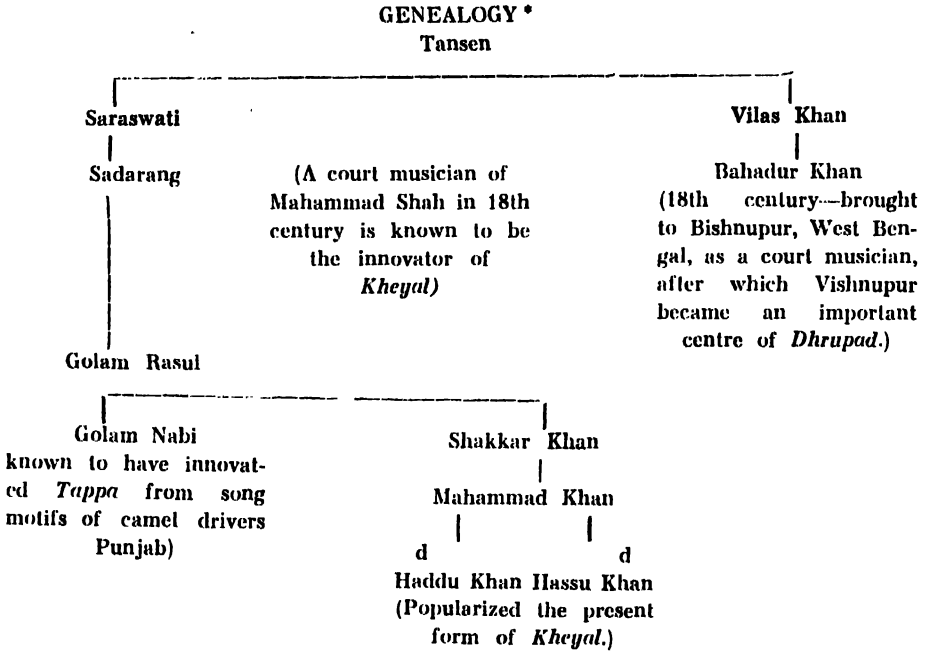
Though it is generally said that in South India, the original Indian musical tradition is better preserved, in a way South India has deviated more from the original theory by later systematisation on the basis of 72 scale system. In North India, on the other hand, the essential elements of Hindu music have been transmitted through practice only. The expansion and innovations of forms and styles that have been developed also seems to be within the scope of flexibility of earlier Hindu music theory.

I may now say something about the genealogical frame-work of transmission of musical tradition in North India :

The central figure in any form of vocal or instrumental music of North India is Tansen, the chief musician of Akbar's court. Any impor-

tant musician of North India comes either from Tansen's family or from Tansen's disciple family or try to link himself with Tansen family with fictitious genealogy. I am not concerned with the authenticity of these lineage claims, but it is important to consider the fact that there is a roughly agreed version of the genealogies which carry considerable weight in naming of the styles of playing of the present exponents of music. It is likely that a good part of the genealogy may be correct, as one finds some corroboration with the Moghul Court Chronicles. At least the notions of the lineage has some spiritual influence in shaping the styles and teaching system of different *Gharanas,* or schools of music developed at the courts of rulers or chieftains in different parts of India. The origin of vocal music have been traced back even before Tansen.

Genealogical chart * of important figures in the development of vocal music of India is given below :



d = disciple

The principal classical forms of vocal music in North India at present are :

* From "Bharatiya Badyajantra," by J. M. Sengupta, Calcutta, 1959 (in Bengali), and "Bharatiya Sangeeter Katha," by Probhat Kumar Goswami, Calcutta, 1961 (in Bengali).

1. *Dhrupad* (the most popular form from around the 13th to the 18th centuries A.D.).
2. *Kheyal* (developed around the 18th century A.D. and is growing in popularity today)
3. *Thumri* and
4. *Tappa* (developed around the 18th-19th centuries A.D.).

In *Dhrupad* the theme consists of four stanzas—(1) *Sthayee*, (2) *Antara*, (3) *Sancharee*, (4) *Abhog*. *Dhrupad* is considered to be the most sober and serene form of music. It is characterised by a very slow melodic movement of clear pure notes without much embellishment and distinct pronunciation of the words. The only embellishment used are broad glissandos. Pure *Raga* forms are expressed through *Dhrupad*. The word theme is either religious or in praise of heroes.

The presentation of *Dhrupad* starts with the slow movement of *Alap* using vowels or meaningless words like *tom, nom*. Then the theme is sung and repeated with doubled and re-doubled tempo. Variations are made by starting the theme from different parts of the rhythm cycle. There is not much scope for melodic improvisation with the theme. *Mridanga*, which is also called *Pakhawaj*, is used as the accompanying percussion instrument. Some of the *Tals* used in *Dhrupad* are common with those of *Kheyal*. But some characteristic *Tals* (e.g., *Chauta!)* are exclusively used in *Dhrupad*. The practice of *Dhrupad* is on the decline. There are very few living exponents of *Dhrupad* at present. Important *Gharanas* of *Dhrupad* are: Udaypur, Benaras, Betiah, Gwalior and Vishnupur.

Kheyal is at present the most popular form of classical music in North India. It is rich and ornamental and there is much more freedom for melodic improvisation. The literal meaning of *Kheyal* is whimsical. The name might have been given by some orthodox exponent of *Dhrupad*. Word theme is quite subordinate in *Kheyal*. The execution of *Kheyal* needs a lot of skill and practice.

Performance of Kheyal is divided into the following sections:

1. *Alap*—or slow melodic movement with vowels expressing a particular *Raga* structure, unbound in rhythm.
2. *Theme*—consists of two stanzas: *Sthaee* and *Antara*, set in rhythm and words. The melodic part expresses all the essential elements of the *Raga* structure.
3. *Bistar*—or variation and development of the theme within the frame-work of the selected *Raga* and rhythm. Both vowels and words of the theme are used for melodic development.
4. *Tan*—quick succession of the notes with different arrangements within the frame-work of the *Raga* and rhythm.

5. *Boltan*—Tan formed with the words of the theme.
6. *Sargam*—solfa passages.
7. *Tehai*—part of the *Sargam* or *Tan* repeated three times, calculated in such a way that it ends on the first beat of the rhythm cycle.

Important *Gharanas* or *Kheyal* are: Delhi, Gwalior, Patiala, Kolhapur, Jaipur, Benaras, Agra, Sekendrabad, Nazakabad, and Maharashtra.

Thumri: Thumri and *Tappa* are considered to be comparatively lighter forms of classical music. *Thumri* is set in light *Ragas* like *Piloo, Kafi, Bhairavi, Khambaj.* No *Tan* is used. It is characterised by some typical melodic motifs and cadences. Foreign notes (i.e., notes outside the *Raga*) are often introduced for sweet touches. For example, in executing *Thumri,* in many cases, all the twelve notes are touched in *Bhairavi* and *Piloo* in such a way that the essential form of the *Ragas* are not much disturbed. Compared to *Kheyal* less skill or rigour in practice is required for the presentation of *Thumri.* In a way, *Thumri* needs more emotional and imaginative ability than *Kheyal,* without which *Thumri* becomes monotonous. In *Kheyal* there are more or less definite rules for the development of the melody.

Lucknow, Benaras and, later on, Calcutta became the most important centres of *Thumri.* Punjab also has a characteristic form of *Thumri.*

Tappa: may be described as light *Kheyal* with frequent application of a characteristic melodic embellishment. The melody progress with a quick succession of to and fro movements between neighbouring notes. Light *Ragas* like *Khambaj, Bhairavi* and *Kafi* are suitable for *Tappa. Tappa* cannot be set in *Ragas* with skips and complicated movement of notes. Word themes are always about love. Important centres of *Tappa* are: Punjab, Lucknow, Benaras and Bengal

From the statements of different scholars of history of Indian music, it is apparent that definite authentic evidences indicating the development of the above mentioned forms are not available. Names of some persons are associated with the innovation of these forms, but there is a lot of difference of opinion among the scholars about the dates. As I am not a historian. I am not sure whether further research can ever resolve these discrepancies. I shall merely quote the statements of some scholars which would indicate the difficulty of coming to a definite conclusion about the exact time of development of the forms. But even through these confusing informations one can feel some continuity with the ancient Indian tradition, which seems to have been blended smoothly with the folk elements at different stages and has also been enriched by the absorption of later foreign elements from Persia and Afghanistan. This unifying tendency might have disturbed the distinct identity of the different historical stages.

Hindusthani or the North Indian system of music in the present form seems to have started taking a distinct shape from the reign of Alauddin Khilji (1296-1316). Alauddin was a patron of music. He had quite a few great musicians in his court. The classical *Dhrupad* form might have been developed by the musicians of his court. There are differences of opinon among the scholars about the innovator of *Dhrupad* and also about whether *Dhrupad* was a continuation of ancient classical textual forms or a modification of contemporary folk forms. The following extracts from the writings of some of the scholars of history of Indian music would indicate the contradictory nature of the different views:

Translated extracts from *Bharatiya Sangeeter Katha*, by Probhat Kumar Goswami, (1961), written in Bengali.

> The three famous musicians—Nayak Gopal, Baiju Bawra and Amir Khasrau were at the court of Alauddin Khilji..... (p. 44).
>
> *Dhrupad* is an ancient form of music. It is not true that Mansingh popularized *Dhrupad*. The Sanskrit name of *Dhrupad* is *Dhrubapad*. The *Prabandha* songs have been mentioned by Bharat (2nd century A.D.), Matanga and Sarngadev. Bharat has described the *Dhruba* part of the Prabandha songs in Sec. 32 and verse No. 483 of his Natyashastra. *Dhrupad* has been developed from *Dhruba*. The language of *Dhruba* was Prakrit *Saursni*.. (p. 45).
>
> *Baiju Bawra*, a wandering Sadhu was invited to Alauddin's court... According to experts (name has not been mentioned) Baiju had developed *Dhrupad* from *Dhruba*. Since Hindusthani classical music has been developed from *Dhrupad*, Baiju is known as the father of Hindusthani music... (p. 46).
>
> Alauddin invaded Debgiri in 1307 and brought Nayak Gopal, the court musician of Debgiri, (South-India) to Delhi. Gopal used to sing Sanskrit *Prabandha* songs. After coming to Delhi, he composed some Hindi *Prabandha* songs following the Sanskrit *Prabandha* forms. He innovated many *Ragas*—like Gouri, Purabi*...etc. (p. 47).

> Haridas Swami was born in 1315. Raja Mansingh and Tansen were disciples of Haridas Swami. It is said that the compositions of Haridas Swami were influenced by the style of Gopal Nayak and Baiju Bawra. (ibid. 85).

*It is interesting to note that the present form of Punjabi contains both natural and augmented fourth in the scale, but no South Indian *Raga* contains both natural and augmented fourths.

Transplation of extracts from "Bharatiya Sangeet Hindu Musalmaner Yukta Sadhana," by Kshiti Mohan Sen (1949).

> Amir Khasrau innovated *Dhrupad* by modifying Indian folk musical forms during the period of Sultan Hussain and Sultan Alauddin (1296-1316). *Dhrupad* compositions of Khasrau have been compiled in "Ragha-e-Hind" in Persian in 1518..Mansingh classicalised the *Shursen* or the folk form of music prevalent in Gwalior into *Dhrupad* with the help of musicians like Nayak Bakshu and following the examples of Amir Khasrau and Gopal Nayak. Baiju also helped him.

Translated extracts from "Rabindra Sangeet" by Santidev Ghosh (1958) :

> We know Haridas Swami as the Guru of Baiju, Ramdas and Tansen.

Extracts from the translation of Ain-I-Akbari by Jadunath Sarkar :

> The second kind is called *Deshi* or applicable to special locality, like the singing of the *Dhrupad* in Agra, Gwlior, Bari and the adjacent country.
>
> Kalawanti or Bards are well known and sing *Dhrupad.*
>
> The *Dhadi* women chiefly play on *Daf* and the *Duhul* and sing the *Dhrupad.*
>
> The Kanajri : The men of this class play Pakhawaj, the Rabab and the Tala, while the women sing and dance.

From the above extracts it is impossible to determine the period in which Baiju lived. But he is generally accepted as one of the great exponents of Hindusthani *Dhrupad.* It is also the accepted notion that during the 13th to 16th centuries, Amir Khasrau, Nayak Gopal, and Raja Mansingh played very important roles in developing the present form of *Dhrupad.* Since textual forms of *Ragas* and *Tals* are used in *Dhrupad,* it does not seem to be completely disconnected from the ancient classical forms, even if it has been nourished by regional folk forms.

Even if we have to disregard the authenticity of all these informations from the point of view of historians, it is useful to record these common accepted beliefs as a factor influencing the attitudes of the musicians of India today. It is at least evident that the musicians of India liked to feel a continuity and connection with the much respected great old musical tradition, even through fictitious genealogy and by mixing up contemporary forms with old names and forms through the ages. The

sense of continuity attained that way might have inspired the musicians in their pursuit of music. To understand the source of inspiration of the musicians of India, the beliefs of all the living exponents of Indian music should be collected systematically, even if the information is proved to be historically faulty. The information given below has also been collected from the books from which the extracts have been collected. Though the following discussion deals with more recent history, and the different writers are more or less of the same opinion, the historic authenticity of most of the information may be equally doubtful.

After the fall of the Pathan Dynasty, Gawalior became an important state. The king, Mansing, and the queen, Mriganayani Devi of Gwalior were good musicians and patrons of music. The chief musician of Mansing's court was Tansen, who was originally a Gaudya brahman but later became a muslim. Haridas Swami, probably a Maharashtrian brahman was the Guru of Tansen and Mansing. Tansen also took lessons from a Persian musician, Mahammad Gawas. Tansen is said to have introduced Persian motifs in Hindu music.

The next important period in the history of Indian music is the period of Emperor Akbar (1556-1605). Akbar was a great patron of music. There were many famous musicians at Akbar's court. In the seventh year of Akbar's reign, Tansen was brought to Akbar's court and became the chief court musician of Akbar. Four styles of *Dhrupad* developed in Akbar's court by the different musicians, including Tansen are the following:

(1) Goudya—peaceful and slow
(2) Khandar—rich and full of variety
(3) Dagar—simple and sweet
(4) Nauhar—intense

Tansen concentrated more on melodic movement than on rhythm or words. He is said to have innovated many *Ragas*. But many of them may be old *Ragas*, renamed by Akbar when they were first presented before him. Bahadur Khan, a descendent of Tansen's son Vilas Khan developed a school of Dhrupad in Vishnupur in West Bengal.

Two important styes of music were developed by the descendents of Tansen's son Vilas Khan and daughter Saraswati. Most of the present popular forms and schools of music are said to have been innovated by the descendents and disciples of these two branches of Tansen's descendents.

Sadarang, a descendent of Tansen's daughter is said to be the innovator of *Kheyal*. Sadarang was a court musician of Mahammad Shah during the early part of the 18th century. But the present form of *Kheyal*

is said to have been developed by Haddu and Hassu Khan who are related to Sadarang through a chain of disciples.

Tappa is known to be developed by Golam Nabi, who was also the descendent of one of Sadarang's desciples.

After the fall of Moghul Empire, Audh (Ayodhya) became an important chieftaincy. In 1847 Wazed Ali Shah became the Nawab of Lucknow, the capital of Ayodhya. He tried to form a court like Delhi and brought all the important members of the Tansen *Gharana* to Lucknow.

In 1856 Lord Dalhousi banished Wazed Ali from Lucknow on the charge of bad administration. He stayed in Calcutta and hundreds of musicians were around him at Calcutta. He is said to be the innovator of the *Thumri* form. His disciple, Ganpat Rao, who belonged to the Gwalior Royal family, improved and developed *Thumri* into the modern form.

Although Delhi was the original centre of Hindusthani music, other *Gharanas* have developed different styles of presentation. The details of the characteristics of the styles of different *Gharanas* have not yet been systematically recorded. But the connoiseurs of music can recognize the particular *Gharana* to which a musicians belongs, from the style of presentation.

Maharashtra has a special position within North India. Though there are some famous Hindu musicians in Benaras, Mathura and Gwalior, the important musicians of North India are predominantly muslims. Maharashtra follows the North Indian system of music, but it has some similarity with South India. Like South India, the exponents of music in Maharashtra are mostly brahman scholars. The presentation of music is more rigidly bound by rules and there is less freedom of movement compared to the styles of the typical *Gharanas* of North India.

In 19th century, Bhatkhande,[5] a Maharashtrian musician and scholar, interviewed many musicians all over India and collected their opinions on the structure and different aspects of music. He published a compilation of many popular *Dhrupad*, *Kheyal* and *Thumri* themes with notation. He organised the first music conference in 1915 at Baroda, where there were performances and discussions with musicians all over India. Within 1925, there were five music conferences. Bhatkhande founded a music college at Lucknow with help of donations from Nawab of Rampur. Music thus became a part of the university course at Lucknow. Another Maharashtrian musician, Palushkar, founded music schools at Lahore and Bombay, where free music lessons were given. He had many disciples, who are at present famous Maharashtrian musicians.

Bhatkhande and Palushkar's endeavours helped very much to extend the scope of students interested in music. Previously, it was very diffi-

cult to persuade the musicians of different *Gharanas* to give music lessons. When the teacher agreed to give lessons, a ritual called *Nada Bandhan* was usually performed. The *Guru* would lay a thread on the wrist of the disciple and promise in the name of God in the presence of his other disciples to give all his knowledge to the disciple. The disciple, on the other hand, would promise to obey the Guru and consider him as his spiritual father. Thus, a permanent, sacred relationship was established between the *Guru* and the disciples. This ritual could bind a muslim master to a hindu disciple and vice versa.

Since the abolition of the Zamindari system and the merger of the princely states within the last few years, the whole organisation of *Gharana* is changing at a fast rate. All the important exponents of different *Gharanas* are collecting in the large cities like Calcutta, Delhi and Bombay. Ustad Ali Akbar Khan one of the leading instrumental musicians of India has founded schools for teaching music at Calcutta. The late Ustad Bade Gulam Ali Khan used to spend six month at Lahore, Pakistan, and six months at Calcutta every year. The famous sitarist, Ustad Vilayet Khan, is also at Calcutta most of the time. At Delhi, the government-sponsored organisations like Sangeet Natak Akademy and Bharatia Kala Kendra are engaged in the development of music. Music is also popularised through the All India Radio, where Ravi Shankar used to organise many of the concerts.

Instead of the kings and traditional connoiseurs of music, the general public is becoming the patron of music. Anyone who can pay school fees can take music lessons in the music schools and the universities. Anyone who can buy a ticket can listen to a good concert.

Classical Indian music, both vocal and instrumental, has been introduced even in such popular mass media as movies. Some of the movies are built on the mythological life histories of such great composers as Tansen and Baiju Bawra. Many of the musicians of today have actively participated in these movies, adjusting their performances according to the requirements of the medium. The musical part, however, does not often fit in appropriately within the setting of the movie. Some very specially gifted musicians like Ravi Shankar have been eminently successful in adapting classical as well as folk musical themes most appropriately as back-ground music in a number of movies.

There is now undoubtedly a greater scope for learning music and the production of musicians of average ability has been increased. But it is yet to be determined whether the quality is improving. The musicians have to take account of the public opinion during the performance. There is no doubt that the general public has become more conscious about classical music. Great crowds gather around his series of music conferences in Calcutta from October to February. But the musicians

have to include a large part of light entertaining elements in the performances by public request. Of course, there are some clubs organised by connoiseurs of music where the number of members are limited. When concerts are arranged by such clubs, the musicians, being aware of the appreciative audience, perform in a more sophisticated way.

Most of the musicians of the last generation considered *Ragas* and *Raginis* as gods and goddesses, and perfect presentation of the *Ragas* and *Ragninis* was considered to be the best way of worshipping God. They also believed that the ancient sages could influence natural phenomena through music.

We have lost such faiths and have learnt to laugh at these beliefs in the present age of science. But there is a lot of doubt whether the present generation, with more 'rational' beliefs, has produced musicians comparable to those of the last generation. It is not an urgent problem to modernise these talented musicians, but it is essential to learn, before their deaths, the way they can create such beauty. We should not be too proud of the quantity of production in this age, but should cautiously focus our attention on the study of the quality.

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FOLK TALES

ONE HUNDRED FAVOURITE FOLK TALES Chosen by Stith Thompson, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1968, pp. 439. Price 119s. net.

It is pleasing that inspite of his age, Prof. Dr. Stith Thompson has not slackened his zeal for scholarship, and that he finds time to continue his life-long pursuit of folklore research. His latest book which, it is hoped will not be last, deals with one hundred tales from different countries of the world where the selection "has not concerned itself with local and historical traditions, nor with anecdotes or simple animal tales (whether literary or oral origin) but only with favourite folktales of enough length to develop a recognizable plot". He said again that "The selection of the particular telling to use has come as the result of more than a half century of almost daily familiarity with these tales. The goal has been to find a version (1) that is representatives of well-recognised form of the tale-type, (2) that belongs in geographical area where the tale is best known, and above all (3) that is well told".

The tales of the present collection represents those of many nations like Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Greece, Russia, France, Germany Czechoslovagia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Italy, Spain, Protugal, Great Britain and others. Here is no tale from India although, Prof. Thompson, the veteran folklorist has eminent contribution on the Indian folktales. In this book Dr. Thompson gives a graphic picture of the skilled story-tellers of the country he has chosen. The book is an excellent example of modern scholarship in folktales. In the page of 'Notes and Sources' Dr. Thompson classified tales according to type, origin and region and has very judiciously said—"Those wishing more information about folktales and specially about particular tales than that given" has been referred to Stith Thompson's 'The Folktale', (New York, 1946) and to Anti Aarne and Stith Thompson's "The types of Folktale" (FF communication No. 184, Helsinki, 1961).

This very important volume, based on a clear understanding and authentic sources is bound to be useful to research scholars, students and teachers alike interested in analysing the basic idea and ideals that guided the skilled story-teller and eager listeners for many thousand years. There is scope for bringing out such folktale collections from India and the Indian Folklore Society or the agencies of the Government of India like National Book Trust, Sahitya Akademi, etc. may take lead to that direction.

Samir Ghosal

Indian Folklore Society, Calcutta.

EDITORIAL

Subramania Bharati's greatest achievement is probably "Panchali Shapatham", some of his most delightful poems are in "Kuyil Pattu" which is as mystical as a dream and haunts the reader with the magic of its words. Here he got inspiration from Shri Aurovinda. Bharati, who was born on November 23, 1881 in a middle class rural family of Tamilnad, won a great place in Tamil language and literature. Many of his poems are lure to the Tamil tradition, inspired by religion, both the abstracts and philosophical concepts.

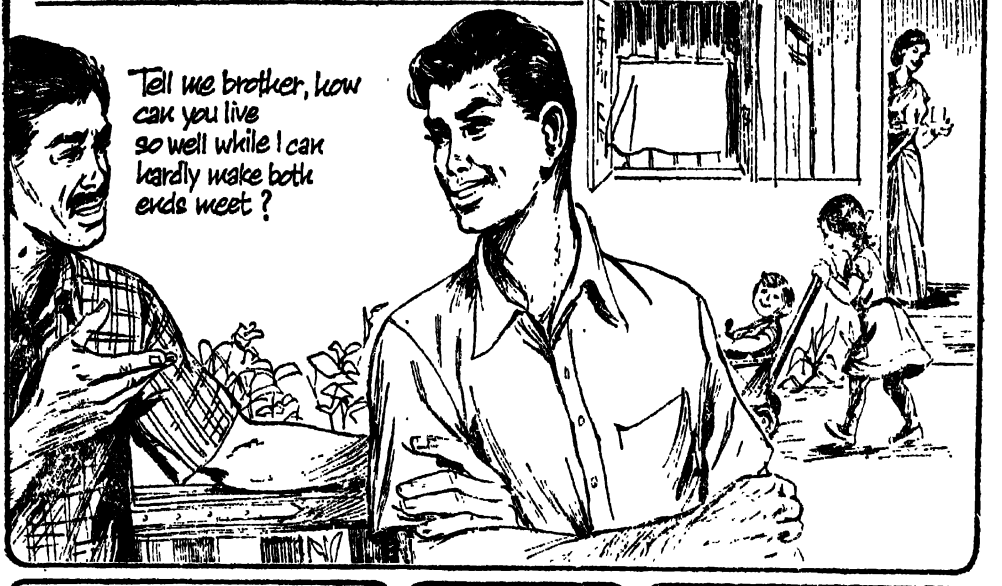
Bharati visited Bengal several times when the struggle against oppression of the then British Government in Bengal won his immediate sympathy. He had great regard too for Bengal. Through one of his lyric, the poet issued a direct call on September 15, 1905. The English translation of the song runs thus—"And like a lion spurning the fox's cajolry you struggle undaunted under the worst oppression (of alien rule) that Bharat may live and regain her glory. That Bengal, I greet thee. May you live long.

Our sacred Mother, wipe off the tears and smile. By their endless struggle and sacrifice your sons have become exalted, and is it not a mother's pride to see her children great? And that glory on earth is only yours. Bengal, I greet thee. May you live long.

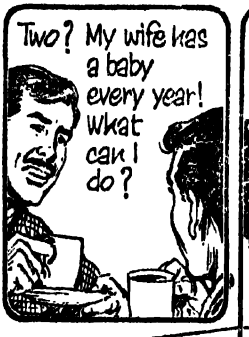
Our is a country which shall never deny us our needs; and how then do we suffer alien patronage? To die is better than to live under patronage. This is your motto; for this I greet thee, Bengal. May you live long". Bharati was a true votary of Swadeshi. But as Gandhiji said that "a true votary of Swadeshi will never harbour ill-will toward the foreigner; Swadeshism is not a cult of hatred. It is a doctrine of self-less service that its roots in love".

The same was the spirit that Bharati had. He loved man but he hated the oppressors—what may their nationality be. So the poet called on all people to join the struggle for Independence. His biting humour and devastatingly satire are pointed at the acquisitiveness and tyranny of those in power and was very much against the corruption. The universality of Bharati's poems has attracted the imagination of a number of Bengali poets and a few of his poems have already been translated into Bengali. We remember all these in connection with the 87th birthday of Mahakavi Subramania Bharati. The poems of this great national poet of Tamilnad who loved his native land and his people with all his heart and soul and hated the oppressors. This valiant fighter who gave his life for the people's cause, retains its appeal for the modern reader.

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GOPAL CHANDRA MISHRA

WOMEN IN ORIYA FOLKLORE

Dr. Mishra is a lecturer in Oriya and is well-known to literary and academic circle in Orissa. Here he has described the position and status of Oriya women from oral traditional materials.

ORIYA folklore rich and splendid as it is, is of immense of dimension and is handed down to us from generation to generation. Projected mostly again in social background, it indicates certain stages of cultural and literary development of the various categories of prose narratives, songs and ballads that are ranging from the eastern costal areas to the western extremities. The Oriya folklore preserve the ancient traditions and customs of the people of Kalinga and Utkal. Undoubtedly, Oriya folklore, like folklore of any other parts of India, consists plenty of romantic tales, episodes, ballads and innumerable rural songs, bulk of which are characterised by a higher degree of poetic inspiration.

1. There are many many domestic tales and folksongs which vividly describe the family-life, norms, behaviours, superstitions, customs, etc and also the likes and dislikes, conflicts and integrity of the folk people. The ballads, nursery rhymes, riddles, proverbs, sayings, rities, rituals are abundant in Oriya literature both written and oral, which provide scholars with valuable materials for the study of the people and their culture.

The various folksongs illustrate the reactions and the behaviours of men and women placed in different spheres of life and faced with conflicts and problems. These songs and tales ranging in variety are packed with human emotion and sentiments, such as, love and separation, and thus have recorded poignantly the interplay of human actions. The peculiar phenomena about these folksongs is that these are sung, nourished and preserved mainly by the womenfolk. Rather these compositions are the monopoly of the women singers. Beginning from the

common nursery rhymes and cradle songs, to the most popular marriage songs womenfolk dominate the arena of description. Both in content and in style womenfolk play a significant role. Marriage songs are excellent and the description of budding brides contribute more to its charm and vigour. These songs contain advices to young brides, often compared to little lily. These marriage songs portray women in their natural garb, are songs whether preparing for the honeymoon night, for bathing, for conducting oneself with dignity and devotion in the father-in-law's place or for grinding the turmeric. In some of the marriage songs the bride is depicted as one separated from her parents thus remembering her joyous childhood thereby weeping and weeping. Some other marriage songs in which the newly married girl is pining for her husband who is away, in another stream her tears flood the raining midnights and nobody knows when the hour of her reunion will dawnupon. In some cases the bride is tortured or humiliated by the mother-in-law perhaps because the brides' fathers' inability to provide dowery. It will appeal that the newly wedded girl is subjected to severe mental agony and she suffers from brutality. The marriage songs represent living people in which the woman is shown as the main determinant in man's affairs. While her womanly attitude is consistently one of deep interest, the emotional tone of it is similarly notable. The women in Oriya folktales and folksongs are very much important and their chief interest is furnishing motives for the action of the heroes of the songs and tales. Sometimes women under the force of circumstances are individualised, marvellously carved out.

2. The history of women-folk depicted in the Oriya folk literature fall into various phases, and it varies with the increase in age. To any student of folklore the inter-relationship of men and women, as revealed here must be interesting, for their enormous complexity of characterisation, their unique trait of universaility. The folksongs demonstrate fair sex in their basic instinct—instinct of self preservation as well as reproduction. The manifold activities of the women in the guise of daughter, sister, wife and mother within the four walls of the domestic life put them both in internal and external fashion.

The treatment of men and womeen in Oriya folksongs, their activities, the endurances of wife, makes admirable study of themselves in social, economic, and cultural context. In family and corporate life, the women have always played an important role, being at the centre of home government or family administration, the central and supervision of the house-hold affairs being left to her responsibility. The village poets have drawn women with sympathy, attention and care and she has always been depicted as one of the determinants of

man's affairs. In some cases the women characters, supply motives for the action of men in family context. For the social customs and age old practices have always became deciding factors in both individual and collective characterisation. The following may be interesting to note :

"Keutuni jhia kali
Antaku sundar suna sikuli
Beke sorisiamali."

Pan bhangi dia champa go
Krushna khaib khile
Pan khai danta pachichhi
Chun khair tule
Satar Baras Athar
Dih kali pathar
Anta bhanga chali dekhin
Dih hua katar.

Ame di bhauni kis kariba
Gahan naiki dein padiba
Gahan naire phutichi malli
Hat badheili tolibi boli."

"Ama bhalukuni rani
Tun bhalukuni banusa kani."

"Ama bhalukuni mundare beni
Tum bhalukuni munda unkuni"
Basantare patar pallabi uthe
Lo mo bayani
To apa dakare mu ulusi uthe
Lo mo bayani
Padma kadhi jale jemanta dhate
Lo mo bayani
Dhal dhal disu mohari kole
Lo mo bayani

ENGLISH

The daughter of a fisherman is black. The golden stip looks nice on the heap of a woman and in the neck is the necklace. The expression indicates her position in family. When a girl is born, she is not liked thus to give birth to a daughter is not considered as auspicious. In this folksong one sees that every girl is fond of new clothes and fashionable ornaments, the daughter of a fisherman is fond of necklace and other ornaments. Here a girl gets affection and love from her parents and brothers.

Then again.

Oh, Champa (Champa being the name of a girl) prepares betels for Krushna, the use of betel has coloured the lips. For seventeen years and eighteen days she has been waiting. Her wait causes anxieties.

What will we the two sisters do, we will jump into the deep river. In the deep river the Malli flower has bloosomed. I extended my hands to pluck flowers.

* * * * * *

Ours is queen of Bhalukuni festival whereas yours is bamboo's piece.

* * * * * *

Again there are flowers in the hairs of our Bhalukuni. There are ants in your Bhalukuni hairs.

The position of a daughter in family can be described from childhood. A girl is slowly socialised to develop into full womanhood in the family, devoted to her parents, affectionate to brothers and sisters and faithful to her husband. She is trained to obey the family elders. Her calm and quietness, her silence, her innocence, her playfulness, her important role in family affairs is being taught to her: There is a proverb in Oriya folklore which implies that when a girl is born, the occasion is alluded to as meant for other houses. Or that is like a bird that may fly away at any time. Her proper place is in her father-in-law's house. At one time child marriages were prevalent in Orissa. A father loves more his daughter while a mother loves more her son. The fact that a girl sooner or later will leave her parents is often mentioned in the family circle and this is the reason why a girl in childhood gets more affection and love than her brother. As a young bride, in the village life, she has shown cool and self restrained courage in sorrow and suffering. She is affectionate, devoted to her husband, duty-bound to her character. Born and brought up in tradition and conviction, she remains an outline figure of all that is innocence in woman's character.

Here is a song that will describe a woman in her youth :

Aru a chaula khiriki
Toh raijar nuanhe mun sundari
Kete anauchhu nirekhi

"Kakharu katile cheki cheki kari
Majhigar kali raita
Soila sejare katha na kanili
Ehi gunabanta Ghaita."

"Leutia sag patali patali
Adha madigala kakar
Sola barasar jubati toki
Kete karu achhua chatar."

Sarda ratire jahna nirmal, he nuabohu
Bada pokharire padma kamal, he nuabohu
Gop mathurae radhika ranj, he nuabohu
Gharaku sundar tune gharani, he nuabohu.

ENGLISH

For cerial, fine and white rice is suitable. I do not belong to your land, oh, beautiful one, why do you look so piercingly at me.....I cut pumpkin into pieces the middle one for carry, I did not utter a word while I go to sleep. Such is my worthy husband. Leutia creeper is found in plot after plot, but the dew drops filled it, the sweet maiden of sweet sixteen, how you are showing yourself..... In the moonlight night of autumn, the moon is silver like, oh sister-in-law.

In the big tank, the lotus is merry, oh, sister-in-law. Radhika is the queen in Mathura, oh, sister-in-law, you are like a jewel, oh sister-in-law.

3. The young girl who has attained puberty is the pet of every one in the family. She is a rare beauty, full with idealism, feelings and sentiments. Her depth of feelings, as one awaiting marriage or already married, is indescribable. Young woman buffling with youth, passion, love and sentiments is superb. She is referred to as a rubby among the pearls. She is full of imaginations, full of honey and flavour. The activities of prospective young ladies are sometimes restricted under social discipline and order. During these important days of her life she gets training at her father's place so that when married she would prove to be a good housewife. She is trained in cooking, preparing tiffin and similar house-hold duties. She is a beauty, rapt in joyous mood, often compared to a queen, a lotus flower, a Champak flower. She worships Lord Shiv, Lord Krishna to get a worthy husband. She is compared to Rambha, Urbasi etc. in beauty. Both her social and family obligations are important.

Young married girls describe their own miseries in poignant language. *Phaili Pali* (first time, when the bride goes to her father-in-law's place) *Budhabar* (old worn out husband), *Bhagaripur*, (the hell of the father-in-law's place). *Koili Duta* (the peacock being the messenger of the bride to her parent's place *Nua Bohu* (newly married maiden) *Bhainana* (the elder brother of bride) *Jema Melani* (farewell of the bride) *Sati,* (devoted housewife and others.

The following song is self explanatory.

Magusir dhan kiari bas bapa he
Tum lakhmi gala dur bidesh, bapa he
Pausa masar sit kakar bapa he
Kaha beke deb mukuta har bapa he
Ede bada jad magha makar bapa he
Gelha jematiku karil par bapa he

* * * *

Sathia hatar gabhir fera go mo ma rani
Luca doke ghare bikil jhia go mo ma rani.

* * * *

"Eka Mahanadi Pachasa kosa he nuabohu
Mate chhandidel dur bidesh he nuabohu.
Bhata khat bat dhoi jari nathili he nuabohu
Handare bhata sheibiboli he nuabohu."

* * *

Kamal futile debalayaku he nuabohu
Jhianka janam para Gharaku he nuabohu
Kukuda na khae khai
Mo nana nakhanti saru chakuli lo
Kamu anidebi dahi mahaprabhu se

* * *

Sagada jauchhi ghidi ghidi kalo
Dianka pokhari dein
Bou ta mo lagi kandibu nanhi lo
Nanata dele bhasia.

* * *

Chaula manaka bhata gunde lo
Dhobani pachha ke neu
Bhai ganta jod kadua hela lo
Khali dhoba kari deu Mahaprabhu.

ENGLISH

Oh, father your daughter is equal to the paddy field's fragrance during the month of December-January. Today she is leaving your shelter, and the mother Pausa is full of cold and mist, whom will you offer your ornament ? It is bitter cold in Magha, oh, father, how could you forsake your daughter ?

* * * * * *

Oh, my mother—the well is sixty feet deep, knowing fully well how could you sale your daughter in a family of cloth dealers ?

* * * * * *

Oh, my sister-in-law—the river Mahanadi is fifty miles away, how could you give in marriage of your *nanad* at such a distant place. I was brought up in so much of luxury and comfort that I did not know how to wash my face after food, but to-day I am required to cook food in a big brass vassal.

* * * * * *

If lotus blooms, it is for the temple Similarly the birth of a daughter is for father-in-law's place.

* * * * * *

The bullock-cart is going near the village tank, Oh, mother you should never cry for me.

The newly married daughter imagines how much strain and stress she has to face in her new set-up. There are, of course, folksongs which depict the ideal image of daughters and sisters who on occasions receive praise for their hard works and enduring qualities, their charming appearances. In absence of their parents and brothers, the

daughters or sisters do not put up ornament, do not take food, do not use perfume or flowers, do not wear costly dresses. This idealism of daughters and sisters make their position in families still important.

4. There are songs that are connected with the religions, superstitious beliefs and practices of women in various walks of life. Such songs are enchanting pieces of love poetry, Vratas and Mantras and so on. Main feature of the love songs consists of an emotion or sentiment expressed for the lover or for the fulfilment of love. Thus we meet the jealous brides, charming sister-in-law or wives deserted by their husbands or ill treated by their cruel morthers-in-law. In most original domestic tales, we find pictures of young sorrowing sweet sixteen. In absence of husbands they are subjected to the vagaries and whims of mothers-in-law. The timidity of newly married brides, their hopes and fears illustrate the fact that brides spend miserable lives under trials and tribulations. The marriage songs, love songs or the songs referring to battles of bye-gone days are recited by the peasants at work in the field or forests in groups. The girls on their way to the bathing ghats of village ponds or river ; or travellers resting by the fire at night in village waiting halls often sing such songs. At weddings, the parties of bride and bridegroom and at other social festival the villagers sing songs merrily. Exchange of gifts like betels and flowers take place. These are the most spontaneous and brilliant songs reviving old memories, poignant and powerful. The music is always fresh thrilling. An illustration of Oriya a folksong depicting the women against the background of marriage and society is given below :—

"Pahali pali bou delu pathi sangare aithih
Sangare jaithile sankakei lo adhabataku boli
Mo nana gale jhia jauchhi boli melani delelo
Nananka muhanku je chainhili muhi nana
Dhairjya dhari paranti nehe lo."

Here the young daughter is taking leave of her parents before departing for her father-in-law's place and she is almost drowned in tears. Again in another song "KOILI DUTA" the daughter remember her parents while going at in-law's place and in such condition the entire home, neighbourhood and village seem flash before her eyes. Her companions of childhood days appear in her mind one after another. The cuckoo is appointed as messenger to carry her news to her village.

"Koili lo.
Moha pain udi udi jibu
Mo bou nanaku kahi
Man udhharibu lo : koili."

5. The village poets exhorted that women must be honoured and adorned by their father, brothers, brothers-in-law. The need of conjugal happiness has been always enjoined upon and its absence in the life of a maiden has been strongly deplored. In that family where the husband is pleased with his wife and wife is happy with her husband happiness becomes assuredly lasting. At the same time purity and sanctity of women must be guarded. On account of her beauty, charm, delicacy, sweetness and softness, woman has been given a privileged position in the society. A woman always needs to be protected and adorned.

Jhuri jhuri tanu khin
Jhimite na dise chandra badan re
Jhuri na sarai din mo kahnu re—

Her health is shattered day by day brooding over separation from her baby, at the slightest delay of her baby's return to home and the his/her long absence is simply pitiable. There are great many folksongs which depict the women as mother, loving and always anxious for the safety and wellbeing of her children. When a daughter-in-law gives birth to a son, she gets the affection and attention of entire family. The Oriya folklore constitute a great number of prayers to local deities for the safe of children. To bear children is the most auspicious and vital duty of a woman. The fertility of a woman is an invaluable assets, her barreness is looked down. In Oriya folklore sometimes a loving mother is indentified with Jasoda. A married woman is always blessed as "May God grant you health, happiness, wealth and children". One hundred sons are always mentioned in such blessings.

In some folksongs the mother is described as eager as possible to train in the art of entertainment and lighting the burden of husband, her daughter for her father-in-law's house. Her shyness, delicacy and modesty have become proverbial. Her constitution and temparament being delicate and mild, she is to be treated tenderly and cazoled.

6. The woman in the role of mother, wife, and sister has always provided consolation and companion to man in times of sorrow and distress. The following song describes a woman as a wife.

E bate khaman se bate khaman
Majhire jauchhi jadi
Jadir machhaku e fulbadi
Na pare tole chhadi
Bali ful mar badali koli
Nichhe tole rasi gali.

Saru dhan pari nabin gori
Saru khandi pindhi kari
Hasi hasi kari katha kahibi
Am amruta bhunjila pari
Tutu koli buta basini chhai
Tam niri dham mui.

As a wife her position is explicted and in her relation behaviour and acts. Love constitute principal theme of folklore. In the above song the wife is described as a lamp shinning in the house. She is tender, charming, and often compared to a piece of paddy grain. The husband talks to her always laughingly and almost coaxingly. As such woman's security, position and privilages are always guaranteed. She depends on her husband and such dependence is not to be understood as her weakness. She also derives pleasure in absolute surrender to her husband and she regards her husband as the only source of her joy and interest in life. Many folksongs reflect the view that it is the husband who can rescue his wife from all wordly sins.

She is always advised to be akin to her husband in qualities of both head and heart. In times of illness, she should act as a therapetic agent. Her youthful loveliness is the cherished dream of her partner. As the propagator of the race woman always enjoys precedence over man.

7. Romantic tales or fairy tales in Oriya abounding in fantastic situations and increditable women characters. These stores reveal inordinate jealousy of step-mothers, and co-wives. Adventures and wicked princes are introduced sometime as against innocent charming and domesticated girls. Some of these stories may be mentioned here, such as *Chakulia panda Katha* (the story of the beggar brahmin), *Kaluribenta Katha, Rajapua, Mantri pua katha,* (stories of the king's son and minister's son) *Chari Samgat Katha* (The story of four mates). The general background of all such stories is either epic or social.

Each of these stories is replete with touches of women in various roles. The longings and desires of women are reflected well their anxiety for the longivity and prosperity of their husbands and children, the homely pictures of every day life and its problems, trails and erros are also there. Innocent maids,' tortured women, devoted wives, loving mothers and sisters—all find their place in folklore. Many folk-tales or folksongs provide a picture of the sad plight of women of middle class society. The obscure village poets have recorded sympathetically the unheard crisis of agony. They lay stress on their women characters.

Next in literary and social importances are the women described in the votive tales among which the pathetic legendary story "T'a Poi" (The youngest daughter of a merchant king in a family of seven

brothers and seven sisters-inlaw) strikes one as a wonderful and enchanting. "Ta Poi" was liked by her parents extremly whenever she made any demand that was then and there granted. But darling "Ta poi" after the death of her parents was very much tortured by her seven sisters-in-law, when her seven loving brothers were away on a oversea trade. To add to this, one Brahmin widow instigated the sisters-in-law against "Ta poi" and argued that she might as well prove the potential enemy to them when their husbands would return from oversea trade. On this, the seven sisters-in-law except the youngest one, got furious and "Ta Poi", once, the darling of her parents and brothers, was forced to look after the family goats.

In tattered dress "Ta Poi" was wondering in the dense jugle, hunger and thirst stiring in her face, with a herd of goats. Among all the seven sisters-in-law only the youngest one was somewhat kind and well disposed towards "Ta Poi" and at times she used to give her food secretely. One day it so happended that the favourite he-goat of the eldest sister-in-law got lost in the dense forest. This enraged the eldest sister-in-law to beat "Ta Poi" mercilessly and further she was ordered to run to the jungle and find out the favourite animal. Dejected and hungry 'Ta Poi' in that pitch dark night entered the jungle to fetch the goat back. During her sojourn she stumbled upon the village goddess "MANGALA". "Ta poi" kneeling down before "THE GODDESS MANGALA" worshipped her and offered her the only handful of raw rice which the youngest sister-in-law had kept concealed in her tattered cloth when she was beaten and driven from the house. "Ta poi" cried before the Goddess "MANGALA" bemoaning her bad luck. At this critical hour, hearing her cry a man approached her and gradually it was known that he was nobody but the youngest brother of "Ta poi". All the seven brothers had returned and their ships were at ancher at the river side. Tapoi was taken to the ship after bath, she was presented valuable clothes and jewellery. Next morning when the wives of the seven brothers assembled is the river side to perform the "Welcome to the Boats" ceremony, all the brothers in one voice enquired first of "Ta poi" and the sisters-in-law replied that Ta poi was lying ill at home. On this false reply the seven brothers directed their wives except the wife of the youngest brother to go to the ship in deep water where there is a goddess to be worshipped. When the sisters-in-law reached the ship, they were as if thunder to notice that the goddess was no other than "Ta poi" herself in new dress and jewellery who was beaten, tortured and driven out by them in the previous evening. "Tapoi" was seated there with a sharp knife in her hand. As instructed by her brothers she with great pain cut

off the noses of each sisters-in-law as they approached her to worship one after another. Thus, in utter shame they fled to the jungle where they were devoured by the tigers. All the brothers with their darling sister "Tapoi" and the wife of the youngest brother returned home, married again and thus settled down happily. This votive festival is observed by unmarried girls in the villages in memory of Tapoi's pain and sufferings and in emulating of her pure character. The story of Tapoi represents maritime activities in ancient Orissa and the family and social condition of all sea going merchants in those days. The jealously of sisters-in-law, their cruelty and on the other hand the tolerance of young girls like "Tapoi" are reflected in such stories. The Goddess "MANGALA" is a symbol of protector of young girls seeking her divine blessings. There are several vows or *vratas* observed by women in villages of Orissa from time immemorial and the main object of these *vratas* is to wish long life and happiness to their families. These Vrata Kathas (ritual tales) play an important part in the religious and cultural life of women of Utkal. Mention may be made of some of the "VRATA KATHAS"—"SOMNATH VRATA KATHA", "MANGALBAR OSHA" "BUDHEI OSHA" NAGULI CHATRURTHI VRATA, BALI TRUTIYA. Sometimes a typical account of the worshipping brides is found in the Vrata Kathas. In most of the Vrata Kathas the idea is to eulogise ideal and devoted housewives and to emphasise the importance and value of observing a particular Vrata during the year. In most cases their back-gound is epic or pauranic. It has always been the practice with the folk bards to portray good women and emphasise on their good qualities as against haughty and quarrelsome ones.

When we examine all what have been said here, we find that the precepts and folk sayings carry fundamental teachings. And by their nature and number we can study the character of the men and women who created them The present study which has been written at the request of the editor to whom writer owes his obligations and debts for helpful suggestions.

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PRADYOT KUMAR MAITY

CO-WIVES IN BENGALI FOLKLORE

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I

POLYGAMY is an ancient practice in India. The antiquity of this practice may be traced back to the early Vedic period.[1] In ancient India polygamy was prevalent among both the upper and lower classes,[2] though ordinarily it was not encouraged by the earlier legal literature.[3] However, references to polygamous marriages are often found in ancient Indian literature. Similar marriages have been current in India till recently among the Hindus but the India Government has passed a law against this practice. The practice of polygamy which had its origin in early times, has persisted throughout the ages in India. Similar is the case in Bengal.[4] A critical survey of the folklore materials of Bengal gives us an idea about the institution of polygamy and the life of co-wives. The present study is an attempt to trace the image of co-wives as reflected in Bengali folklore.

In Bengal the co-wife is termed as the *satin*—a term of heart-burning. From the *chhadas* (verses) of the *vratas*, the *prabads* (folk proverbs), the legends and the stories which belong to the domain of folklore, we find glimpses of life and characters of co-wives in Bengal. These folklore materials of Bengal reflect the inner feelings, desires, aspirations, status and jealousies of women as first wives and as co-wives. Folklore materials record that though monogamy was usual, yet polygamy was prevalent in Bengal among both the upper and lower classes. We are told in the story of the merchant Dhanapati as found in the *Chandimangal-kavya*, that Dhanapati married Khullana as his second wife simply out of lust.[5] In the same text was also find that being a member of the low caste Dharmaketu, the father of hunter Kalaketu, had decided to marry for the second time as no child was born for a pretty long time to his first wife. However, before the acceptance of a second wife by Dharmaketu, a son was born named Kalaketu by the grace of the goddess Mangal Chandi to his first wife and the idea of marriage for the second time for the barrenness of the first wife was abandoned.[6]

In the principal legend of the *Manasamangal-kavya* (i.e. the legend of the merchant Chando, Behula and Lakhindar) we also find a reference to the practice of polygamy by lower classes. When Behula was floating with the corpse of her husband on a raft of banana stumps in the river, she was met on her journey with an angler named Goda who being infatuated with the beauty of Behula, proposed her to marry and promised to give her better protection than his first wife.[7] Moreover, the number of polygamous marriage upto seven is also reflected in folklore. There is a proverb.

সাত সতীনের ঘর-কন্যা, ঘরে গিন্নী ভাত পান না।[8]

ENGLISH

As the seven co-wives manage the household,
the mistress of the family (mother-in-law) is neglected.

A similar reference is also found in the folk literature of Bengal. In the *Chandimangal-kavya* we find that when the merchant Dhanapati accepted Khullana as his secand wife, his first wife Lahana became neglected by her husband. Lahana met her friend Lilabati, a Brahman by caste and lamented before her for a change in her husband after the coming of the co-wife Khullana. Lilabati tried to pacify her by saying that she had also six co-wives but she was never disheartened.[9]

Thus we find from our above discussion that a second wife is accepted either out of lust (as in the cases of Dhanapati and Goda) or for the barrenness of the first wife (as in the case of Dharmaketu) and that the number of polygamous marriage upto seven was also current in Bengal.

II

The coming of co-wife is not desired by the first wife as the life of the latter becomes miserable which is evident from the following speech used by the first wife.

একা ছিলাম ঘরের মাঝে মাথার ঠাকুর।
সতীন এলো, আঁস্তাকুড়ের হলাম কুকুর॥[10]

ENGLISH

When I was alone, I was loved by all as a goddess,
the Co-wife has come, and I have become as neglected as a
dog of the dustbin.

With the arrival of the second wife, the first wife passes her days with sorrow and suffering. The first wife remains very busy during the day time but at night she suffers much more pain as the husband deprives her from his sweet company and shares the bed of his second

wife. The mental reaction of the first wife is known from the following proverb.

দিন গেল হেলায় ফেলায়,
রাত হল সতীনের জ্বালায়।[11]

ENGLISH

My day rolls on some-how unnoticed,
But my nights are painful due to my co-wife.

Since the arrival of the co-wife, the first is not only deprived from the company of her husband at night but also suffers in various ways. The first wife suffers at the hands of her co-wife. Moreover the co-wife's brother causes trouble. The following is the words of regret.

জ্বালা দিতে নেই ঠাঁই, জ্বালা দেয় সতীনের ভাই [12]

ENGLISH

I have been suffering much since my co-wife has come,
And now my co-wife's brother (who perhaps resides in the family) also causes much trouble to me.

We also find similar words of lamentation. Co-wife herself is dangerous but her relatives are also very dangerous to the first wife or vice versa. That the co-wife's relatives become more dangerous to the first wife or vice versa is found from the following expression.

সতীনের ঘা সওয়া যায়, সতীন কাঁটা চিবিয়ে খায়।[13]

ENGLISH

The ill-treatment of a co-wife may be tolerable,
But that of her relatives is unbearable.

Sometimes such a condition has arisen that the first wife has to leave the house. When she is on the way, she also sees that the father of her co-wife is approaching. At that time she makes the following remark which is very significant to trace the character of the father of a co-wife.

বাড়ী হতে বাহির হলাম সতীনের তাপে
পথে গিয়ে দেখি আসে সতীনের বাপে।[14]

ENGLISH

When I leave the house due to the ill-treatment of my co-wife,
On the way I see that my co-wife's father is coming.

This proverb reflects the character of the father of co-wife who also participates in the conflict between his daughter and the first wife of her son-in-law. It may be the case that the co-wife is being instigated by her father to make the life of the first wife miserable. The strained relations between the first wife and the co-wife becomes

more complicated due to the interference of their fathers as it is evident from the above speech.

From our above discussion it is clear that when the first wife was alone, she was loved by all; but with the arrival of her co-wife, her position becomes more unstable and miserable. She suffers trouble not only from the co-wife but also from her relatives.

The first wife always remains busy to satisfy her co-wife. A survey of the day to day life throws much light on this point. One day the first wife had cooked broth of *khalse* fish which was not liked by the co-wife as the *khalse* fish was not usually cooked in this way. The co-wife became angry and decided not to take meal. The first wife became anxious at the step of the co-wife as she knew well that if the co-wife was disatisfied she would be deprived from the sympathy of her husband. Their husband would be more unsympathetic to the first wife as he has then more adicted to the second wife (co-wife). The following is the statement made by the first wife.

খল্‌সে মাছ দিয়ে আজ রাধলাম ঝোল।
সতীন আমার রাগ করেছে, মাথা ধরে তোল ॥[15]

ENGLISH

As I have cooked broth of *khalse* fish today,
My co-wife becomes angry with me and now I shall have to request her to eat.

The coming of co-wife in general is undesirable. Especially when a sister as a co-wife comes, she becomes the source of great trouble to her elder sister (i.e. to the first wife). There is a fine expression in folklore where it is stated that if another woman as a co-wife comes, she may be tolerable; but if her own sister comes as a co-wife, she is intolerable as she gives much trouble to her elder sister. The following proverb reflects the idea.

আন সতীনে নাড়ে চাড়ে,
বোন সতীনে পুড়িয়ে মারে।[16]

ENGLISH

Other woman as a co-wife may be tolerable,
But a sister as a co-wife becomes the sources of great trouble.

III

Now let us say something about the relations between the co-wives. The co-wives never believe each other as their inimical relations know no bounds. Folklore material give sufficient evidence to this point. References to the story of hostile relations between the

co-wives are found in many Bengali fairy tales. Even we hear in these tales that sometimes a co-wife murdered another co-wife by using poison in food. The following proverbs throw light on the inimical relations between the co-wives.

সতীনের হাতে সাপের ছোঁ, চিনি দিলে তুলে খো।[17]

ENGLISH

A co-wife may be compared with a cobra ;
So if she offers sugar to another co-wife,
That should be left aside.

সতীনের বাটিতে গু গুলে খাওয়া।[18]

ENGLISH

To eat something in the house of a co-wife (by her another co-wife) is nothing but to eat stool.

Thus generally co-wives cultivate unfriendly and strained relations between themselves as is evident from the above proverbs.

যমকে ভাতার দিতে পারি, সতীনকে তবু দিতে নারি।[19]

ENGLISH

I am ready to sacrifice my husband to Yama (the Regent of Death),
But I cannot allow him to my co-wife.

This remark has been made by a wife who has lost all sympathy of her husband due to another wife to whom her husband has been more attracted. A husband's partiality to a particular wife and negligence to other is also reflected here. Being jealous of her co-wife's fortune, the neglected wife has made this remark and decided to, take revenge on her co-wife till she survives.

Sometimes a neglected wife tries to draw the sympathy of her husband by pointing to her husband about his partiality to her co-wife. The proverb is the following.

এও জানি সেও জানি, কিছু নেইক বাকি।
সতীনে দিলে সোনার গয়না, মোরে দিলে ফাঁকি॥[20]

ENGLISH

I know each and everything, nothing is unknown to me.
You offer ornament of gold to my co-wife, but have deprived me from this.

There is also evidence recorded in folklore that mostly it is the husband centering whom the quarrel between the wives begins. Moreover after the death of the husband the friendly relations between the wives establish. The following proverb reflects the truth.

ভাতার মল ভাল হ'ল, দুই সতীনে পিরীত হ'ল।[21]

ENGLISH

It is good that the husband has died, two co-wives cultivate friendly relations between themselves.

Though the co-wives usually cultivate strained relations, there is also a reference in the *Chandimangal-kavya* where we find that Lahana and Khullana, the two co-wives of the merchant Dhanapati cultivated friendly relations from the beginning which was not liked by the maid-servant Durvala who made a breach between her two mistresses—Lahana and Khullana. Then the inimical relations between Lahana and Khullana started.[22]

To a husband second wife is more dear than the first wife in the case of two wives. Natural beauty of the youth of the second wife is the vital cause of attraction. So the first wife is often neglected. We are told in the *Chandimangal-kavya* that as a protection against this negligence unscientific medicines and charms were used by Lahana as advised by her friend Lilabati to win over the sympathy of her husband Dhanapati and to repulse her husband's attraction from her co-wife Khullana.[23] But unfortunately the quack medicines and charms were of no effect on Dhanapati.[24]

Of course it is recorded in the same text that Lilabati who prescribed the unscientific medicines and charms to Lahana, herself was successful to win over the full sympathy of her husband as well as of her mother-in-law and sister-in-law by using unscientific medicines and charms. She was given marriage to a man who had already six existing wives; still she controlled her husband with the help of quack medicines and charms.[25] The story of the use of unscientific medicines and charms in such occasion is also heard even today in Bengal.

IV

A man having more than one wife lives under one roof (in one house). Whenever a number of wives of an individual live in a same family, the mistress of the family (the mother-in-law) is neglected. None of the wives takes care of the mother-in-law as all of them remain busy with strives between themselves. The proverbs where we find light on this point are as follows.

দুই (সাত) সতীনের ঘরকন্না,
ঘরে গিন্নী ভাত পান না।[26]

ENGLISH

As the two (seven) co-wives manage the household,
The mistress of the family (mother-in-law) is neglected.

Or,

দুই সতীনের ঘর, খোদায় রক্ষা কর।[27]

ENGLISH

O God (Allah), save the family where two wives live together.

Whenever a number of co-wives live in a same house, they find no mental peace among themselves. They are to suffer much trouble and pain. The following proverb reflects the idea.

সাত সতীনের নড়ি চড়ি, বেড়া আগুনে পুড়ে মরি।[28]

ENGLISH

When seven co-wives live together,
They find no mental peace.

Sometimes different wives of an individual live in separate places. Whenever a co-wife comes to the house of her another co-wife, the former is very badly received by the latter as it is reflected in folklore.

V

In Bengal womenfolk observe many *vratas* (religious vows) for the fulfilment of specific desires. The *Senjuti vrata* is one of them. It is generally believed that if the maidens observe this vrata, they would be successful in their hearts' desires. This vrata is to observe every day from the last day of Kartika (Oct.-Nov.) to the last day of Agrahayana (Nov.-Dec.).

We have already said that the coming of co-wife is not only undesirable but also painful to the Bengali women. For this the maidens of Bengal pray to God by observing the *Senjuti vrata* so that the co-wives will never come to their future married lives. The status of co-wife in Bengali society is inferior to that of the first wife. Especially in the eyes of the maidens, the status of co-wife has ever been very low as we find in the *chhadas* (verses) of the *Senjuti vrata*. The following *chhadas* of this vrata reflect the attitude of the maidens to co-wife.[30]

ঘট্ট ডুমুরের (?) মত মাঝখানি,
হই যেন স্বামী সোহাগিনী।
হিংসেয় মরে সতীন কানি,
দিনরাত পড়ুক চোখে পানি।

ENGLISH

Let my waist be like (the shape of) a wooden *dambaru* (a small drum),
May I be the beloved of my husband
(Then) my co-wife will be jealous (of my fortune)
And she will cry day and night.

From the above *chhada* it is clear that the maidens use abusive languages to co-wives. They not only use abusive languages but also

prepare themselves to take many more drastic measures against co-wives. The following *chhadas* of the same vrata reflect the idea.

খ্যাংরা খ্যাংরা খ্যাংরা
সতীনকে ঝেঁটিয়ে করবো দিশেহারা ॥

ENGLISH

O Broom stick, O Broom stick, O Broom stick
I will beat off my co-wife out of my sight with the help of a broom.

From the above *chhadas* of the *Senjuti vrata* we find the attitude of the maidens to co-wife and the maindens also seek a way of escape from the life of co-wife.

But in the second thought they change their attitude, thinking of the longstanding practice of polygamy—a practice which cannot be eradicated by prayers only. Then they say ;

আয়না আয়না, সতীন যেন হয় না।
যদি সতীন হয়, মরে যেন যায়।

ENGLISH

Mirror, Mirror, let there be no co-wife.
If she comes, let she die soon.

Next they become more realistic and pray to Lord Siva in the following words :

হে হর, মাগি বর, স্বামী হোক রাজ্যেশ্বর,
সতীন হোক দাসী, বছর বছর একবার করে
বাপের বাড়ী আসি।

ENGLISH

O Lord Siva, bless me so that my husband will be a king ;
My co-wife will be a slave, and I may go to my father's house once in a year.

Thus from a critical analysis of the above *chhadas* of the *Seenjuti vrata* it is clear that the maidens show hatred to the life of co-wives in the beginning but finally they are to surrender to the social practice of accepting co-wives and of becoming co-wives themselves.

VI

In the following pages we have traced the inner feelings, desires, aspirations, status and jealousies of women as first wives and as co-wives as depicted in Bengali folklore as far as possible. Moreover the attitude of the maidens to co-wife has also been traced here. The present study gives emphasis on the concepts of day to day life of the folk women that cannot be traced from any other source and here lies

the importance of the functional value of the folklore of a particular society. The status of co-wife (i.e. except first wife) in general, has ever been very low in society and they have been the subject of criticism by all especially the female membrs of the locality. Co-wives were and are usually dangerous. They become so as they were directly or indirectly supported by their husbands.

Thus some aspects of the picture of Bengali society from the early mediaeval period down to the second quarter of the present century have been traced here from folklore materials. The present study also helps us to understand the importance of folklore materials in the field of social history.*

*I am grateful to my friend Mr. R. K. Hazra who has kindly gone through this article and has suggested a few improvements. My initial debt go to the editor "Folklore" for his providing idea in writing such an article.

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দিন থাকি ভাল রাত্রি হয় কাল
দুঃসহ বিরহ বাথা

12. *Ibid.*, S. No. 3505, p. 383.
13. *Ibid.*, S. No. 8120, p. 744.
14. *Ibid.*, S. No 5605, p. 552.
15. *Ibid.*, S. No. 2147, p. 269.
16. *Ibid.*, S. No. 414, p. 128; Cf.

(a) আন সতীনে তবু সয়, বোন সতীনে কভু নয়।
(Ibid., p. 128)

(b) মিম তেতো, নিসিন্দা তেতো, আর তেতো খর।
তার চেয়ে অধিক তেতো বোন্ সতীনের ঘর॥
(Ibid., p. 479)

17. *Ibid.*, S. No. 8126, p. 744.
18. *Ibid.*, S. No. 8125, p. 744.
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20. *Ibid.*, S. No. 883, p. 167.
21. *Ibid.*, S. No. 6217, p. 599.
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দু-সতিনে প্রেমবন্ধ দেখিয়া দুর্বলা।
হৃদয়ে লাগিল তার কালকূট জ্বালা॥
* * *
যে ঘরে-দু- সতিনে না হয় কন্দল।
সে ঘরে যে দাসী থাকে সে বড় পাগল॥

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 107-109.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 109.

ঔষধ প্রবন্ধে কহে মুকুন্দ বিশারদ,
বুড়াকে না করে শুন মোহন ঔষধ।

25. *Ibid.*, p. 108.

নাহি করি দয়া বাপ দিল বিয়া
দারুন ছয় সতীনে।
অল্প বয়সে মোর পরবেশে
এ ছয় সতীন ঘরে।
শাশুড়ী ননদী ঔষধেতে বান্ধি
আমার বচন ধরে॥
ঔষধের গুনে স্বামী বোন শুনে
যেন পিঞ্জরের শুয়া।
নিদ্রা গেলে আমি চিয়াইয়া স্বামী
মুখে তুলে দেয় গুয়া॥
ঔষধের বশে প্রকার বিশেষে
স্বামী ধুলা ঝাড়ে মুখে।
গেলে পিতৃবাস করে উপবাস
যাবৎ মোরে না দেখে॥

26. De, S. K., *op. cit.*, S. No. 4140, p. 436.
27. *Ibid.*, S. No. 4141, p. 436.
28. *Ibid.*, S. No. 8304, p. 758.
29. *Ibid.*, S. No. 8125, p. 744.
30 For the *chhadas* of the *Senjuti vrata* see any popular book on "Meyder Vratakatha". Also see "Folklore", January Vol. X, No. 1. pp. 16-17.
31. Almost a similar expression is found in the *Gokal vrata* where the maidens pray to the cow so that they could murder their co-wives and live happily.

তোমাকে বাতাস করি
সতীন মেরে ঘর করি।

Tamralipta Mahavidylaya,
Tamluk, Midnapur.

KUNJA BIHARI DAS

WOMEN IN THE FOLKSAYINGS OF ORISSA

Professor Dr. K. B. Das is a renowned scholar, a poet and a distinguished folklorist of Orissa, who is also a member of the contributing Editors of this journal. The subject he has treated is not only interesting but also thought provoking.

THE character portrayed in folksayings or proverbs may not be a fully developed one as one can find it in a novel or a drama. For a proverb is too narrow a field to afford scope for full development ot characters. It depicts in one flash one aspect of the human character.

There are hundreds of proverbs that depict the king being whimsical and foolish, the money lender miserly and hateful, the mother-in-law wilful and arrogant, the daughter-in-law sad but revengeful, the neighbour un-sociable and quarrelsome in Orissa. Being lively in the lips of the traditional reciters they provide us in a world of every-day experiences of the common man. These characters may be divided into (1) family, (2) neighbours and villagers.

1 : a. The joint family is still an important institution in India, tied and united in a bond of affection. The father is the chief earning member. Grown-up sons supplement the family income. An ideal father is a dynamic personality and occupies a commanding position in the family. He inspires his family members at every step.

1 : b. The influence of the mother is the most significant. For her the object of life is to endure life. Her faith in the supreme make her endure all hardships of life. She is the most sacred and most self-sacrificing character on whose integrity the joint family rest. Status and stability of the home cannot be retained unless she be clever. There is a proverb in which we know that if the *Sal* tree be used as posts, the palm as refters, cane as ropes and if the housewife be sensible, then the house lasts long. The old and experienced housewife is able to maintain a balance in the family. She creates a feeling of equality among its members and does not permit it to disintegrate with her rash actions. The father is unable to maintain the family with heaps of gold and jewels while the mother does it with a handful or husk powder is a popular belief in Orissa.

1 : c. The marriage of the daughter, considered traditionally as

the highest virtue for the parents, proves to be the hardest job for the family. There is a belief that the luck plays an important part in solution of this complicated problem. The daughter is to marry in a family with which she was related in her previous birth. As one takes his bath in the river of the place of pilgrimage however muddy, so one should marry a girl of one's own caste however ugly. A handsome girl of one's own village is not chosen for marriage for familiarity breeds contempt. An ideal daughter ,is an asset to two families i.e. that of the father and the father-in-law, while an opposite one is a burden to both. All these knowledge we get from different kinds of proverbs that are in action.

1 : d. A daughter is considered as selfish than a son. Usually she likes her parents as long as they could send presents. When discontinued she snaps all relation with them. The mother and the daughter may go to the temple together. But desires they express for fulfilment by God are generally different. Death of a daughter before marriage is no doubt a sad incident. But sometime it is a relief. There goes a saying :—

> Bitter curry, debt un-obtained
> Daughter's death—sad incidents indeed
> But serve better ends afterwards.

1 : e. Widowhood is considered as a more sorrowful incident than daughter's death. A widowed daughter is taken as a curse to the family. A widow is as irresponsible and carefree as a bull which admits no bond. A grown up daughter should not be kept long in her fathers' house. She is spoiled as pure ghee retained unused long at home. The social position of the father of the daughter is lower than that of the father of the son which we know from a number of Oriya proverbs. Acceptance of dowry over the marriage of the daughter is considered a sin.

1 : f. A youngman is advised to marry a lady of fair complexion and restrain her from the very start of conjugal life. A son-in-law staying long in the father-in-law's house is condemned. He suffers very badly. He has no freedom of action and has no scope for development of his personality.

1 : g. A bright picture of the happy conjugal life is drawn in some Oriya proverbs. The husband falls ill. The devoted wife spends all her savings towards the medical expenses and also worships and prays to god for his recovery from the disease, for husband's love is the only solace for her to live. Sometime these are taken as exeggeration by some and disliked by the mother-in-law and sister-in-law but that

does not matter to her. Nobody takes a serious view of the squabbles between the husband and the wife. One such incident is described satirically in a folksaying. Once due to misunderstanding and harsh words the husband and wife came to blows to each other. Naturally, as it happens, the husband beats his wife. The wife nonco-operated in domestic work and sat idle. The husband had to do all household duties. Unexperienced to such work he burnt his moustache and the wife enjoyed it very much. This is expressed in the following sayings.

'Did I marry you only to be beaten with fists ?
All right, if you beat me—go and cook.

Thank God, your moustache is burnt
while blowing the hearth,
That is how you are paid back in your own coin.

1 : h. Daughter-in-law's first coming to the mother-in-law's house is not always welcomed. She is sometime considered as a lady of ill omen thus her first step for the entry in her husband's house is linked with the serious illness of her husband. She is turned out and refused her entry. Then the articles which she brought along with her as dowry are also thrown out. This is beautifully mirrored in the popular sayings of Orissa.

1 : i. A pretty and virtuous lady is sometime made to sleep on the floor all alone. This speaks of the worthlessness of her husband who falls in love with an unchaste woman and divorces her. A proverb describes this in the following way :

'The unchaste lady enjoys the softest bed
The queen of the house is treated as a maid servant
Milk remains unsold after strenuous drive in the street.

A divorced wife is offered with maintenance, but she retorts that she is a girl of sixteen, foods and clothes alone cannot satisfy her.

1 : j. The daughter-in-law sometimes leads a miserable life in the house of her mother-in-law. So the marriage and the consequent taking away of the bride by the son-in-law is considered as unhappy an incident as the carrying away of her by a tiger. Neither the mother-in-law nor the sister-in-law has any affection for her. Often they come into quarrel with each other. The sister-in-law takes the side of the mother-in-law in her quarrel with the daughter-in-law and whispers all her secrets to the mother by which the mother gets irritated. This sister-in-law or 'Nanad' in some family is a source of constant trouble to her. But as soon as she gets married she too become a daughter-in-law and undergoes all the hardships herself in the manner her

brothers's wife used to get. After the marriage of this sister-in-law daughter-in-law's sufferings come down to some extent but then she wants the death of the mother-in-law in order to get rid of her control in family affairs. Here is an example to that effect.

'Will my mother-in-law die ?
May I be the housewife ?
Will goodluck favour me ?'

'My sister-in-law is as quarrelsome as a co-wife.
Will she die ?
I will then pray and worship God
Going at the place of basil plant

1 : k. Co-wives are known as quarrelsome and revengeful. If there is co-wives and if they quarrel, the home becomes a hell. When no occasion for quarrel is found, one is advised to marry a second wife. In their zeal for revenge one may even kill her husband if he is neglectful to her. A co-wife is unable to foresee the danger coming upon herself and rather enjoys her co-wife undergoing all sufferings of widowhood.

2 : a. Some greedy parents brought about marriages between young girls in their first bloom of beauty and wealthy old men in observance of certain orthodox conventions. The picture of an old bridegroom shamelessly smiling and the young girl weeping bitter tears—a match of inequality and prospective widowhood for the bride is really one of sorrow and disgrace. The old fool has no reason to be happy for she is meant to be enjoyed by others. Poverty is preferred to marriage with an old and affluent person.

'A palace for residence
An old husband
Tears flow
A cottage for residence
A young husband
Smiles grow.'

2 : b. Most proverbs carry the stamp of autocracy and oppression which was the order of the day in Orissan States till recently. The king uses all sorts of violent for realisation of taxes. His subjects are compared to ginger. Juice comes out when ginger is struck hard and pressed. So are the subjects. They pay taxes all right when violent pressure is exerted on them. There goes a proverb

'If you like to stay
in kingdom of a Raja.
Do not cover your out-house'.

For that will create the impression that the owner is a well-to-do person and the despotic ruler may order to carry away all his movable property. Let us conclude the study with the following proverb which depict a fine picture of rural life :—

How do you know goddness of a friend ?
He sympathises in sorrow.
How do you know goodness of a wife ?
She serves her husband well.
How do you know cleanliness of a village ?
From the washing ghat of the pond.
How do you know goodness of a son ?
He supports the father in old-age.
How do you know goodness of a mother-in-law ?
If she be sociable.
How do you know goodness of a daughter-in-law ?
If she serves good dishes.
How do you know goodness of a husband ?
If he loves his own lady.
How do you know goodness of a money-lender ?
If he talks sweetly.
How do you know goodness of a brother ?
If he helps you against the enemy.
How do you know goodness of a rich man ?
If he feeds hundreds and thousands.
How do you know goodness of a servant ?
If he responds to his master's call.
How do you know goodness of an old man ?
If he prays to God everyday.

Thus a proverb can be said to be a criticism of life under various circumstances and this is true not only in case of Oriya proverbs but also in the proverbs of other places of the world.

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SHRIRAMA INDRADEVA

WOMAN IN FOLK AND ELITE TRADITIONS— A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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THERE is a general impression that social relationships and culture in the elite and folk strata of society are essentially different in nature. Consequently it is taken for granted that the status and role of woman in the classical and folk segments are basically different from each other. However, an objective analysis of the content of the classical and folk traditions in Indian Civilization would reveal that this is not so. In this paper an attempt has been made to bring this out. While analysing the data from the two traditions and outline of the image of woman in both the traditions will have to be constructed. This by itself is an interesting and a challenging task. But our chief emphasis shall remain on comparing the classical and folk images on significant points.

In order to compare the images of woman in the classical and folk traditions in a proper perspective it is necessary to have a correct idea of the nature of inter-relationship of these traditions themselves. One significant fact to be noted is that eventhough the sophisticated classical tradition which thrived primarily in urban centres came in close contact with folk culture, it never threatened the existence of the latter. This is in sharp contrast to the relationship between the modern urban culture and the folk culture. It is well-known that with the impact of modern industrial culture, folk-culture tends to decline. The modern industrial civilization swallows up folk-culture. What then is the reason of this difference? How did the folk-culture survive and even strengthen itself despite close contact and constant interaction with the culture of the elite in the ancient and the medieval times? The answer to this question lies in the fact that while the values of the modern urban culture are basically antigonistic to the values of the folk, the traditional elite culture shared an essentially common *weltenchuaang* (world view) with the folk culture. The modern urban ideas of individualism, activism, competition and

unlimited acquistiveness are fundamentally antithetical to the folk way of life based on co-operatoin, contentment and traditionalism. As against this, the traditional elite culture was based on the same metaphysical notions and mundane goals which inspired the culture of the folk. Naturally, the basic social institutions, values and attitudes were the same in the two traditional streams of culture. Because the basic ideas underlying the two streams of culture were not antithetical, they could freely borrow elements of culture from each other, without the fear of threat to their own pattern. In fact there has existed for millenia a relationship of give and take between the classical and folk traditions in the fields of literature, music, visual arts, metaphysics and religion. Numerous forms of folk poetry, motifs of folktales, folk melodies, popular metaphysical notions and deities were taken over by the elite and integrated in the classical tradition with some modification and refinement. At the same time the folk culture has all along been borrowing elements from the classical tradition and integrating them with its own fabric. There is undoubtedly a difference in the nature of the elite and the folk traditions but it lies not in the basic spirit or content but in the degree of sophistication, systemization and self consciousness. For instance, both the elite and folk poets sing of the frolics of Krishna but the difference is that of the degree of refinement of form.

In view of this relationship between the elite and folk streams of culture in traditional civilization, it would not be wrong to expect essential unity in the assessment of the status and role of woman. In both the strata, the patriarchal joint family has been the corner stone of the whole social structure. And it would appear that the requirements of the solidarity of the joint family necessitated a subservient position for woman. Both in traditional elite and folk traditions, man is the master and the guardian and woman is expected to obey him and to be protected by him.

Both in the elite and folk traditions, woman has been assigned a status lower to man. Obedience is considered the most important virtue for woman in both the traditions. This is amply brought out by a study of the Dharma-Shastras and also by the analysis of the content of folk-songs. Many folksongs sung at the time of *Biya* (departure of a newly married girl from her parent's house) exhort her to obey the husband and other elders in his family.

The woman is considered dependent on man. Many folk-songs compare a woman without her husband to a boat without its boatsman :

> **Just as a boat is tossed aimlessly on water without the boatsman, so also by life has become without my husband.**

A Similar view has been expressed in the works of the classical tradition. Parasara, Narada, Brahaspati and Katyayana have given a secure and respectable position to woman. though they have considered her dependent on man. Narad says :

> "Through independence, women go to ruin, though born in a noble family.
> Therefore the creator has assigned dependence to them".[1]

Dependence on man is prescribed for woman in every stage of life. This famous verse is found in the *Narada Smrti,* as well as the *Manu Smrti* :

> The father protects her during childhood,
> The husband protects her in youth
> And the sons protects her in old age,
> Woman is unfit for independence.[2]

In fact the woman is considered unfit for independence in all peasant civilizations based on plough agriculture. Thus the law of three obediences prescribed by the famous Chinese Code of *Li Chi* is essentially the same as dictum of the *Simrtis* cited above.

It appears that low status of woman was a basic requirement for the stability of the priarchal joint family itself. Such extended family was the corner-stone of peasant civilization and its solidarity could not be compromised at any cost. But if such families were to remain stable woman had to be kept under strict discipline. Under this family system brothers and their sons continued to live together in the same house even after their marriage but their wives came from outside. Thus they were always considered a threat to good relations between the men-folk of the family. Even the *Valimiki Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* contain references to this feeling. Similar sentiments are profusely expressed in folk-songs, folk-tales and proverbs. It is ovious then that the woman had to be kept under subjugation. Apart from straightforward dicta to this effect, certain institutional and valuational patterns were evolved in order to keep women under subjection.

The low age of marriage seems to be one institutional device working in that direction. When the daughter-in-law came at a tender age to her husband's house, she could be more easily moulded according to its requirements. A popular folk-saying compares a good daughter-in-law with a lump of dough which can be given any shape. Descriptions in folk-literature testify to the low age of marriage for girls. A girl who is not given away in marriage before attaining the age of twelve years brings disrepute to her parents. This is strikingly

similar to the prescriptions found in the later Smritis. Narada and Parasara both recomend an early marriage for girls, that is, before she has passed twelve years. They ordain that if a father does not give her daughter in marriage at proper age, he should be punished.

The supermacy of man over woman in the patriarchal order was reinforced also by certain beliefs regarding their respective roles in procreation. It appears that with the strengthening of patriarchy in ancient India, the importance of the part played by woman in procreation was minimized, while the role of man was emphasized to the extreme. In the *Mahabharata,* we come across several stories which imply that the semen of man is alone efficacious in producing a child. Thus the great teacher Drona was born because of semen falling into a vessel made of wood (*drona* in Sanskrit). This story, and several others of this kind, show that the part of woman in procreation was thought to be only that of a container for the semen of man. A similar conclusion is reached in the discussions in the Dharma Sastras of the relative importance of the parts played by man and woman. In the Manu Smirti, woman is equated to the field (*Ksetra*) and man to the seed ; and after some discussion the conclusion is drawn that while the field is necessary, the nature of the tree and the fruit depends upon the nature of the seed, that is, the masculine principle. This comparison of woman to the field is found throught Indian literature. Even in folk literature, which thrives through oral traditions, the word "*medini*" stands both for the earth and the female genitals. The *double entendre* riddles and some folk-songs push forward the metaphor by comparing pubic hair with grass.

It is very interesting to note that the comparison of woman with *prakriti, maya* and earth which runs right from the Vedas through the Sutras, Smrtis, Puranas and literary and metaphysical works of all kinds[3] is found also in the oral tradition of the folk, though of course in a simpler and less sophisticated form. *Nirguns* (the songs about the Non-qualifiable Absolute) again and again compare Maya with an amorous and treacherous woman. Such comparison is found not only in songs ascribed to saint poets like Kabir but also in numerous anonymous folk-songs sung and reworked by persons even of the untouchable Chamar caste. The comparison between woman and field or earth is found in many folk-songs, riddles and proverbs. Thus the fundamental conception regarding the essential attributes of woman is the same in both the traditions.

It is quite customary in the classical tradition to emphasize the intricate nature of woman's character. It is often said that it is impossible to be sure about a woman's true character or to understand

her motives. The following dictum is proverbial :

> **Woman's character and man's fate,**
> **Even gods don't understand, needless to speak of human beings.**

In the folk-literature too, the woman's character is painted to be intricate and unfathomable. Thus a rustic proverb says :

> **No one knows a woman's character,**
> **She becomes *sati* (immolates herself) after killing her husband.**

In both the traditions the woman is pictured as undependable. The Sanskrit texts prescribe that a close watch must be kept on women, lest they lose their chastity. Numerous texts picture the woman to be a temptess (*pramada*) and also as one who falls an easy prey to temptations. The folk-literature presents a similar picture. There are a large number of folktales, often popularly known as the tales of *"liriya charittar"* which give detailed accounts of the cunning flirtations of the women of various castes.

Motherhood is considered to be the pivotal role for woman both in the elite and the folk tradition. Motherhood is assigned a great deal of importance also because progeny are believed to be necessary from the ritual and spritual points of view. Marriage is a sacrament in Hindu tradition and continuance of the family line is one of its primary aims. The following verse has to be recited by the bridegroom during the marriage ceremony : "I take your hand for good progeny". The bridegroom has to recite during the wedding the following verse : "From whom all the beings have emerged, from whom has emerged the whole world ; I shall sing the song of the great glory of woman." The son is the continuation of father. A father says in the Rig Veda ; "Oh Fire ! enjoy immortality through my children". In the Vedic age, at the completion of education, the teacher exhorted his pupil : "Do not break the line of progeny." The son (*putra*) means one who saves the father from being cast into a hell named *"put."* The Dharma Sastras prescribe that the husband of a barren woman or a woman who gives birth only to girls, should marry again to beget a son.

In the folk-literature too begetting of progeny is considered necessary. In many a folk-songs, a king who has no progeny overhears a sweeper woman complaining that she has seen the face of a *"nirbansi"* in the morning. This remark naturally makes him very miserable. Words like *"niputa"* (without son) and *"nirbansi"* (without the line of progeny) are used as terms of abuse in the language of the folk. Folk-

songs provide very touching pictures of the plite of the barren woman. She is despised by all. Woman keep a safe distance from her lest they catch her barrenness. In one such song a barren woman's own mother keeps her daughter-in-law aloof from her. The exhasperated barren woman asks a she-serpent to bite her but the serpent does not touch her for fear of becoming barren. At last she asks mother earth to tear up and give her a place in her bosom. But the earth also refuses saying that this might make her barren.

Such being the importance of motherhood, it is only natural that pregnancy is not regarded as an embarrasing condition. In fact the pregnant woman is given a privileged position in both elite and folk traditions. A striking testimony to this is the recurrence of the *"dohada"* motif both in the classical and folk-literature. The word *"dohada"* occurs in both. It refers to the craving of the feotus. These must be fulfilled at all costs. In the *Kathasaritsagar* and other works of classical tradition, we often find a king putting his life in danger in order to satisfy some trivial whim of his pregnant wife. Similarly in many folk-songs we find men taking avoidable risks to fulfil even ununderstandable desires of their pregnant wives. In one such song a pregnant woman expresses the wish to eat *"habassava"* (half-ripened corn). The husband has no field of his own; so he goes to steal it from someone else's field and is caught redhanded.

A remarkable aspect of the relationship between the elite and the folk strata is brought out by the fact that women even of the upper classes share the culture of the folk. In the Sanskrit dramas, including those written by masters like Kalidas, even the royal ladis speak in Prakrit (the language of the common folk) while their men speak in chaste Sanskrit. Thus from ancient period to contemporary times, the woman has served as a link between the classical and the folk culture. This was only natural because due to the emphasis on their roles of motherhood and wifehood. Ordinary women seldom had opportunity for specialized persuit of formal learning.

Thus the position and image of woman in both the elite and folk traditions of culture was essentially the same. However, it is quite probable that the relative economic independence of the women of the lower classes gave them a position of advantage as compared to the women of the upper classes. It is noteworthy that in the lower castes some significant traits of the inferior status of women are conspicuous by their absence. For instance, many lower castes widows have been traditionally permitted to remarry; and in certain cirtumstances they are allowed to divorce their husbands. It is not surprising therefore that the woman of the folk is at times found to be a more vigorous in

her protests against injustice and discrimination. Indeed in many folk-songs a woman in labour pains abuses her husband and says :

"We bound the knot together, but while untying it I am alone."

In a Sohar (folk-song sung while celebrating the birth of a son) a woman says : "If I find my husband at this time I shall bite him, I shall kick him with my feet and ask him to share the labour pains." Such statements, however, have an element of humour.

In folk-tales and songs women also protest against the suspiciousness of men about their chastity. In one story a Brahman who had become suspicious of the chastity of his wife would not take food cooked by her. To avoid contact with her he went away to another city. But the clever wife followed him (without his knowledge) and began to live near his new house. In a short time she was able to attract him. The Brahman, not knowing who she was, ate food cooked by her and while going back home presented her a gold ring. Later the wife showed him the ring and told him the whole story. She asked him how he could think of having intimacies with an unknown woman while he avoided his own wife on mere suspicion.

Many ballads and lyrical songs warn men against succumbing to unconfirmed suspicions about the chastity of their wives. Some of these show how a husband who has killed his wife in anger and haste, later finds that she was innocent. In all the songs which describe the testing of a woman's chastity through ordeals of fire, snake, sun, *tulsi* or Ganga, the woman is proved to be chaste and in most of these she refuses to live any more with the husband who has insulted her by doubting her chastity.

Among the songs concerning women's resentment against injustices, perhaps the most touching are the ones dealing with Sita's banishment by Ram. These are quite a few in number and relate the story with minor variations. Some of these are Sohars (birth-songs), some are Mangals (sung during marriage ceremonies) and others are Jantsars (mill-songs). All these types belong to women. In these songs, Sita who has been sent to the jungle by Rama, because her character was not above suspicion,[4] gives birth two sons (twin sons) there. She sends a *Nai* to take the message and the *rochan* or *lochan* (ritual-paste applied in the middle of the forehead on ceremonial occasions) to her father-in-law (Dashrath), to her Devar (Lachhman), and to others; she is so angry with her husband (Rama) that she explicitly forbids the *Nai* from giving the news to him. She says,

"Give the first *lochan* to Raja Dasharath, the second to queen Koushila,

O Naua! the third one to Lachhman, but don't give the message to Ramaiya."

But Rama comes to know of it and wishes that Sita should return home. In some songs he himself goes to bring Sita back and in others he sends his brother Lachhman or Guru Vasishtha to persuade her to come back. Sita's reply to them shows vigorous. She is in her protest against the injustice. Sita says,

"I will not look at the face of the man who has sent me to jungle,
O Earth! divide, so that I may go in and may not have to meet Rama."

In another song she tells Lachhman indigenantly,

"Go away to your home O Lachhman, now I shall not go,
O Lachhman, if the sons live they will be called his (Rama's)"

In a Jantasar song Vasishtha, the family priest of Rama tries to persuade Sita to go back to Ayodhya. Sita reminds him how Rama sent him to the jungle even after proving her chastity by a fire ordeal.

"Rama took me out after burning and baking me in fire, like gold,
He has tormented me so, my heart will not meet his, even in a dream.
O Guru, I shall obey you and go to Ayodhya,
O Guru, if such is a man's love, may God keep me away from it."

In the above lines Sita obeys Guru Vasishtha and agrees to go to Ayodhya. But in many others songs she merely obeys him by walking ten (in some songs two) symbolic steps towards Ayodhya. She says,

"I shall obey you, O Guru, I shall walk ten steps and come back;
O Guru, how shall I look at the face of that cruel man."

Thus, eventhough the basic ideal for woman is the same in the elite and the folk traditions, the folk woman appears to be more vigorous in her protests against injustice. This may be regarded as a hopeful sign by those interested in radical social change—for the bulk of women in India even now belong to the folk steam of culture.

NOTES

1. Narada Smiriti XIII 30.
2. *Narada Smiriti* XIII, 31 and Manusmrt IX, 3.
3. For a more detailed discussion of this persistent metaphor, see Shrirama Indradeva, "Correspandence between Woman and Nature in Indian Thought", Philosophy East and West, Vol. XVI (1966) pp. 161-168.
4. The story of Sita's banishment in the folk-songs differs significantly from that of the literary versions of the story of Ram.

INDIRA GANDHI

ON FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAMME

Smt. Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India said the following in connection with the sixth All India Family Planning Conference held recently at Chandigarh India.

SIMULTANEOUS progress in programmes of intensive agriculture and family planning can give us the chance of conquering rural poverty. The one cannot be thought of as a substitute for the other.

Family planning is truly a people's programme. Its success rests on individual citizens. They have to be approached, persuaded. promoted and helped to practise family planning. The entire official machinery for family planning, whether at the Centre or in the States, is meant for this task of persuasion and assistance.

In fact, the very significance of calling our movement *family planning* and not population control is that our aim is to secure the welfare of our people. And since the family is the most real and enduring of human institutions we naturally have to achieve this welfare in terms of the happiness of children, wives and husbands. The women of India would be found to be very responsive to any programme of action which ensures the health and future of their children. We have achieved impressive success in terms of numbers since we took up the family planning programme three or four years ago with the urgency and earnestness it deserves. But the success has been limited, as far as I can see, to certain pockets. The most affluent sections of our population and perhaps those groups which are driven by the desire to improve their standard of living, namely, the urban middle class and the 'skilled industrial workers, are the ones most forthcoming to take advantage of the facilities offered by the Government.

Whoever wants to practise family planning should certainly be enabled to get proper advice and assistance. Intensive work is even more necessary in very backward and highly populated areas. We should not be unduly influenced by the forecasts, mostly pessimistic, that are often made about our problems and shortcomings by superficial

observers. We must proceed with our work according to our best judgement.

Our own country, so marked by mass poverty, cannot leave it to individual motivation—because such motivation comes only after a certain level of literacy or economic betterment has already been reached. Japan achieved its spectacular advance in the last two decades because of universal literacy and its rise in the development ladder.

It is because we cannot afford to wait until such consciousness becomes widespread, that we in India require well planned official programmes, which are implemented with determination. We have several advantages. Unlike the countries of the West, there is no organised religious opposition. Also, the educated person, especially the doctor, enjoys high prestige and his or her judgement carries weight.

The biggest enemy of family planning is the lassitude of our people. Even when they are convinced of the benefits of a course of action they make little attempts to exert themselves. Their enthusiasm is often shortlived. The high lapse ratio is a serious problem. This is the reason for our search for a device that has long-lasting effect.

A new danger to the family planning movement has been discernable for some time and it shows the link which politics has with all other aspects of life. There is propaganda to the effect that the family planning programme will upset the relative population ratios of the various groups in our country and thus weaken the political power or bargaining position of these groups. This pernicious doctrine may well convince people because of its very fallacy. History shows ample proof of the spread and influence of false beliefs. Workers in the field and all those interested in the family planning programme must strive to the utmost to combat this sort of propaganda and allay these imaginary fears.

The control of one's family gives greater opportunities for education and medical care and is equally important for all groups, whether minority or not.

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NOTES AND NEWS

Notes and News on folklore and its neighbouring subjects are invited for consideration in this section.

Prosperity of one's family does not depend only on one's economic status, nor is it conditioned entirely by one's formal education. Whatever be one's position in society—a scientist working in a research laboratory or a clerk busy with administrative routine, a skilled labourer in a factory or a temporary hand in search of a job—the size of one's family has an important impact.

That was what Danabhai Hirabhai Bankharia, Shantilal Livjibhai Heerapara, Harsumanrai Satyawantrai Desai and Parantap Pathak, all from Ahmedabad and from different sections of society, realised. They faced bravely the common problem—the pressure of an ever-increasing family—and planned their way to prosperity and happiness.

Dreams Come True : An educated man and an idealist, Danabhai used to dream about a future when society would be just and there would be no more suffering for poor people.

He had a rough deal in life which had shattered all his dreams. He had lost his parental home. The factory, where he had worked, had closed down two years ago, making him a *badli* ever since. As a substitute worker, getting wages only on days when employed, Danabhai could earn only about Rs. 100/- a month. Of his eight children, four had died.

One wise act, though, saved him from financial ruin. He had got himself vasectomised. Ever since liberated from repeated pregnancies, his wife could work in a plastic factory. With this extra income, Danabhai was able to make ends meet. He could now provide education to his children.

After vasectomy, he had found that his mental and physical health was unimpaired. His wife's health, too, had greatly improved.

Rumour Was Wrong : Shantilal was illiterate but intelligent, a skilled worker in a textile mill. One day he visited the ATIRA (Ahmedabad Textile Industry Research Association) factory and was impressed by the intricate methods of textile production. He was sure that with some basic education he could easily pick up the sophisticated

textile production techniques. Shantilal wanted to offer his children the facilities which had been denied to him.

But his income was only Rs. 300/- a month and he had already two sons and a daughter. He had to do something to prevent and further addition to the family, if he was to secure his children's future.

The local Family Planning adviser prescribed vasectomy for him as a permanent solution. But his friends warned him that he would become impotent after the operation. Vasectomy, according to them, was another name for castration.

Shantilal, however, walked to the Vedilal Hospital one morning. He was operated within five minutes. The operation was hardly painful. After a month, Shantilal declared to his friends that they were totally wrong. Vasectomy did not have any adverse effect and his married life was as happy as before.

A Turning Point: Recurrent medical bills once drained the resources of Harsumarai Desai, a clerk. In 1948, his income was Rs. 83 a month. He had also a bank balance of Rs. 7,000 which his grand-father had left him. In twelve years, his monthly income rose to Rs. 200. But during this period, his wife gave birth to four babies and each time it was a crisis for her. Harsumarai had to spend heavily on medical bills during pre-natal and post-natal months. His entire bank balance was gone and after that he incurred debts to meet family expenses. Harsumanrai decided to control further additions to the family. In 1960, he got himself vasectomised and that incident proved to be a turning point in his life. His wife no longer needed medical care. He could spend his earnings for the education of his children and for other necessities of life.

* * * * *

Shri Tangirala Venkata Subba Rao who is working as tutor in the Department of Telugu of Sri Venkerteswara University College, Tirupati (A.P.) has been awarded the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Telugu from the said university for his thesis "Ballad poetry in Telugu". This work was done under the guidance of Prof. G. N. Reddy.

* * * * *

Shri R. M. Sarkar, lecturer in Anthropology, Bangabasi College, Calcutta, has been awarded the Degree of Ph. D. from Patna University. His work has been done under the guidance of Dr. Sachchidananda and it has been highly appreciated.

* * * * *

Shri Dulal Chaudhury, lecturer in Bengali of a muffasil College, has been award D. Phil. from the University of Calcutta for his research on the folklore of Bengal under the guidance of Dr. Bijan Behari Bhattacherjee of the University of Calcutta.

BOOK-REVIEW

LAND CONTROL AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE IN INDIAN HISTORY edited by Robert Eric Frykenberg, published by the University of Wisconsin Press, U. S. A. 1969. Price $ 10.

The work, which is a collection of ten essays, throws good light on the land control and social structure in Indian history. The essays has been selected from the symposium on Indian Land Tenure and Social Structure held at the University of California from June 29 to July 10, 1964. The following essays are included :—

"Land is To Rule" by Walter C. Neale; "Zamindars under Mughals" by S. Nurul Hasan; "Landholding in India and British Institution" by A. T. Embreca, "From Raja to Landlord" by B. S. Cohn, "Social Effects of British Land Policy in Oudh" by T. R. Metcalf. "Permanent Settlement in Operation : Bakarganj District, East Bengal" by T. Ray Chaudhury; "Integration of the Agrarian System of South India" by B. Stein; "The Ryotwari System and Social Organisation in the Madras Presidency" by N. Mukherjee & Robert E. Frykenberg and "Village Strength in South India" by Robert & Frykenberg.

The book has 256 pages which goes far toward changing some commonly held assumptions about the land problems of British and Mughal India. The editor's observation are followed by a theoretical essay which examines the meaning of the concept of 'Land' and then relation, their concept to an Indian *milieu*. The editor in his introduction has briefly described each study and has said how it might contribute to our knowledge of land control and social structure in India. He has said again that "Our object is not to make the study of the obscure complex realities of rural society in India even more esotoricy and technical, rather we would seek ways to make what is obscure and complex clear and plain." This promise is not unfulfilled which any reader could realise by going through the book. But the data in the essays are not current and uptodate. Therefore, the book will not be equally appreciated by those students who are well-equipped with current data and knowledge and those who are not. The land problem of India is getting quick changed owing to developmental and other endeavours. There was scope for the mentioning of this either in the introduction or including an essay to suggest the contemporary position. Nevertheless, the editor, contributors and the publishers are to be congratulated for brining out such a useful work which will be of great value to the administrators and educators alike.

Indian Folklore Society
Calcutta.

Shibnarayan Kabiraj

EDITORIAL

Religion, medicine and dance in pagan times was closely related. The healing of sick was regarded as a function of religion. It was thought that the compulsion to dance was caused by evil spirits in the body or as punishment for having done evil. We know from Anne Ingram, that, Bishop Eligin in 588 demanded fifty person to cease dancing. When they refused to do so, the Bishop prayed that these people be punished. His prayer were answered and the dancers were compelled to dance "for a whole year". In 1021 again a priest came upon a group dancing and ordered them to stop dancing. They ignored him and continued. In an effort to stop his sister from dancing her brother caught her arm and her hand came off in his hand. The priest, unable to persuade the dancers to stop, excommunicated to them. In the name of St. Magnus he asked that they would not be able to stop dancing for a year. When the dance finally ended, the people slept for three days and several of them died. Those who lived suffered from twitching for the rest of their lives. Many such concepts and beliefs woven in with actual events that happened grew into legends that reflect the attitudes and feelings of the people. From these feelings, we know, many fears and attitudes of the people found their way into folk and fairy tales. Actual historical events also appear in some stories and the type materials. How much truth can be found there is a matter of reasearch. With the spread of scientific knowledge religion, charms and tokens are not being valued as formerly. Patients nomore regard as being sick with convulsion and they no longer believe that their sickness is due to the mystical forces. Even-though these beliefs and superstitions have their influence in the living of our folk people which have been proved once again by the sacrifice of humanbeing at Rajasthan in 1968 and again in 1969 to please a local cult. Therefore no serious student of folklore can afford to ignore folklore materials beliefs and traditions of the folk people—or, if they do, it is at risk of landing themselves in a misleading isolation.

Thus bearing in mind that International Womens Day, on March 8, we thought our readers will like to hear a bit more about our women. So the present issue contains folklore of women of different parts of the country. In it is described the sayings, proverbs, etc. and also bits of poetry by bards. All these, it is expected, will open the doors and hearts of the people to a better understanding and appreciation to among people of various countries, and to keep better informed, is a necessary thing.

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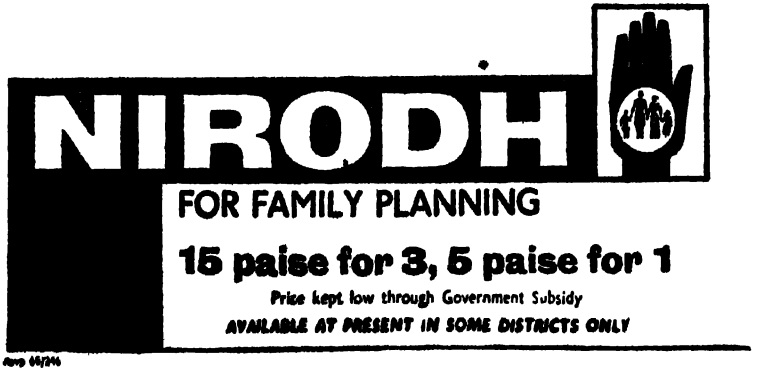
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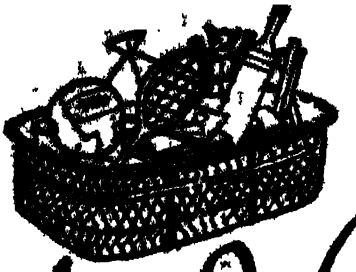
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SAMIR GHOSAL

WOMEN IN FOLK-RITES AND BELIEFS

Social directives had persisted from generation to generation. It was thus a common accepted saying that Hindu women in childhood, youth or old age alike must always live under a guardian. This conviction still remains though the changing economy and resultant new habits of life in our own time are atleast spelling the downfall of the old ideals in practice. In the following pages one will find an image of womenfolk that offers orthodox and primitive ideals but obviously cannot be brushed aside as irrelevant.

WOMAN is compared in innumerable ways to *prakriti* (nature), *maya* (illusion), and earth. Her role in the formation of the family, procreation, sexual union, etc. has been conceived by Indian thinkers in accordance with this notion. The relationship of woman and man is considered to correspond to that of the Supreme Being and *maya*, or *purusa* and *prakriti*. *Prakrti* is the material cause of the physical universe and *sakti* is the personified energy of God, the creator, who creates with his *sakti*. Here *sakti* is an instrument to His. According to Lord Krishna "Nature is my *yoni* (womb), and I am the seed-giving father" (Gita X IV, 3-4). Further, *yoni* is the source of universe according to revelation. The woman is considered the medium through which man manifests himself. She is necessary for establishing fatherhood of man and continuing his family line. These are significant even in marriage rites and rituals. Marriage is a sacrament in Hindu tradition and continuance of the family line is one of its primary aims. A man cannot fulfill his social, ritual and spiritual obligations without his wife. A wife is, therefore, called the root of the *purusartha*, the basic values of life. She is compared to the field or the earth. The seed comes from the father. Even in the sexual act woman's pleasure is

soley dependent on man's. The creation of the world is due to union (*sambhoga*) between *prakriti* and *purusa*, between woman and man.

Everybody knows that Hindu marriage are performed with *shastric* rites. Along with the *shastric* rites, a body of customary rites, follows which is known as *striachar*. In the following lines we will describe some such rites taking Bengal and Orissa as base points. But it should be remembered that this a generalised statement on certain folk rites. As is known to everybody these rites vary from place to place, from community to community, and from village to village.

Striachar in West Bengal :

We start with West Bengal. In different places of West Bengal, the day before the marriage, the *barankula*, the welcoming winnowing fan and *barandala*, the welcoming shallow basket, have to be arranged. This is the starting point of *striachar*. The *barandala* contains a little Ganges mud, a small stone, a conchshell, collyrium, turmenic, a small mirror, a comb, an earthen lamp, vermilion, sandalwood, white mastard seed, *maskalai, dhanya, issar mul, durba*, flowers, a small knife, a bit of copper, *ghee* and swastik. The winnowing fan is similarly arranged. There are small earthen jars or *ghats* which are smeared with turmeric. The whole thing is covered with a silken cloth. After the bridegroom has taken his bath, he is made to stand on a little dais, specially erected for the purpose. The winnowing fan is moved before him in a graceful arc by a *sadhaba*. Then the *barandala* is raised to him and each particular article that it contains is touched on his forehead. A *tilak* or mark of sandal and *ghee* is put between his eyebrows. This may be called inaugural ceremony of *striachar*, the first recognition of the man as a bridegroom.

The next ceremony of *striachar* is performed in the early dawn of the marriage day in the bride's house. Some *sadhabas* with husbands alive sit together in the early morning and cry *ulu, ulu, ulu*, an auspicious sound in ejaculation of joy. The conch-shell is blown, and *tomtoms* and *shanai* strike up a joyful tune. Curds, *chira*, a preparation of rice, and sugar are mixed up together and three or five *sadhabas* are fed with it by another *sadhaba*. After the feeding is over the whole company take a good repast and disperse. This is called *dadhimangal* ceremony or the auspicious ceremony of curd.

Next we come to the day of marriage. The bridegroom arrives in the evening. Some hours before he comes some *sadhabas* go to fetch water. This is called *jalsadha* ceremony. They take a little water from the house of the bride and go on collecting water from the houses of three

or five neighbours, and last of all, they go to a neighbouring tank or river to make the pitcher full the brim. A winnowing fan and a small shallow basket is taken on the head to the river bank. The lady who goes with the winnowing fan on her head puts on a trail of a new napkin smeared in turmeric. This is called *sohaglotan,* or the trail of love. After she returns from the river side, her husband comes to her and cuts off the trail with one stroke of the axe and carried it home in a basket.

The bride is taken out and is made to place her left foot on a flat wicker work, specially made for the purpose. A *sadhaba* also places her left foot on the wicker work. A bundle of straw is then kept there which is three times round the left foot of the *sadhaba.* The bundle is then spread out, and the bride stretches her hand to the fire and feels its heat while taking the name of the bridegroom. Then she is bathed in water that was collected in the evening. She then changes her cloth and goes to her chamber. A red thread of *monamuni,* a kind of fruit, is put on her neck. After retiring to her chamber an earthen pot with full of water is placed before her and she weiths the water out in a small bamboo basket, as big a as man's hand, which is called *pali.* Two arica nuts are placed in her mouth, one on each side, but she should not chew them. This ends welcoming winnowing fan and basket.

Let us see another important technique of welcome which is necessary to describe here. After the arrival of the bridegroom in the bride's house this practice is done with. It is called *sree,* or representation of good fortune and beauty. It is a small temple shaped heap placed on a disc, made of a mixed paste of rice and *maskalai.* It is beautifully decorated, and oil is poured on its head. The *sil,* the pounding slab of the household, is placed on the floor and four plaintain trees are placed on its four corners. The bridegroom is married on this *sil,* by a beavy of ladies, and he stands on it in an erect posture. He is then given a welcome by the *barandala* and the *sree* by some married women, preferably an agnate relation of the bride. The fruits of the *dhautra* tree are cut into two and their stones are taken out carefully without injuring the pericarp. Twenty eight such cup-shaped fruits are then arranged on a disc and a lighted wicker is then placed on each of those. The disc with its lamps of *dhutra* fruits is then thrown over the head of the bridegroom. An earthen lamp with its covering disc, is also waved before the bridegroom. Fourteen threads each to the length of the bridegroom from the crown of his head to his toe are then put tightly round his right wrist. A paste of *heghamla,* a mixture of spices, is applied on his breast. Then a shuttule is put in his hand, and he is asked to bleat like a lamb. A padlock and key is handed

over to the bridegroom and he is asked to close the lock. After the lock is closed, it is thrown into water. This is symbolical for the closing the mouth of the bridegroom, so that he may not quarrel with the bride in after-life. The bridegroom's hands are then tied with a piece of creeper by a lady, the bridegroom's party pays a ransom to her and makes the bridegroom free. The bridegroom then washes the hands of the lady who tied him up with the creeper. The bride is then seated on a wooden plank and carried seven times round the bridegroom. The bride and the bridegroom are then seated face to face, and the latter is allowed to exchange looks with the bride. This is called *subhadristi* and this finishes the *striachar* prior to the actual marriage ceremony. The marriage ceremony proper begins now; and the priest offers the bride to the bridegroom with due incantations and *shastric* rites. The bridegroom accepts the offer and undertakes to maintain his wife. He has not to utter a useless formula as Christian marriages, that he should love his wife and none else during coverture. After the marriage is over, the wearing clothes of the bride and the bridegroom are tied up with another piece of cloth.

Then bride and the bridegroom retire and go to the sleeping chamber for the night. Ladies gather round them, and make themselves merry in all imaginable ways; jests, mirth and songs go round freely. The bride and the bridegroom play with *kouris* by tossing them up in the air catching them in the palm of their hands. The *barankula* is then brought up and the bride takes out the four little pots, containing rice and *maskalai*. She throws out their contents with her left hand and the bridegroom has to refill them with his right hand. The *sara* or disc that serves as a covering to the auspicious lamp, used during marriage is then brought to the bridegroom and he has to cover it with the cloth that he wears. He has then to take the name of his wife and make a promise, three times, that he would try to cover all faults and blemishes of his wife. No one is free from faults. It is unfair for the husband to expose his wife before other members of the household or neighbours. The bridegroom carries a *janti*, the familial nut cracker, in his hand. The bride has also to carry a *kajal-lata* or collyrium-holder. The betel nuts that the bride carries in her mouth during the early part of *striachar* are then cut with the *janti* of the bridegroom. He is given some pieces out of them inside a betel-leaf, folded and dressed in the ordinary way. It is believed, by taking the nut that the bride carries in her mouth, the bridegroom becomes partial to her and begins to dote upon her from the very moment. It must be remembered in this connection that the bulk of the *striachar* ceremony takes places in the bride's house after the arrival of the bridegroom in the

evening of the marriage day. The bride's party have the upperhand over the bridegroom. It is said that a bridegroom is no better than a *chor* or a thief, that is to say, the bridegroom should not assert himself in any way. He should not wrangle. He should put up with everything quietly as though he has come to bride's house like a criminal, the whole of *striachar* ceremony is directed with one end in view to rivert the affection of the bridegroom on the bride, and to make him subservient to her.

Next morning some *sadhabas* go to the bridal chamber to take out the bridegroom's bed. They charge a small fee from the bridegroom for doing the work. The bridegroom then goes to the parlour and is allowed to take a little rest. Just before taking their bath, the bridegroom and the bride are made to stand on the *sil* as in the previous night. The bridegroom takes a little vermilion on the little finger of his right hand, and describes a small image on the back of the bride. The bride does the same on the back of the bridegroom with the little finger of her left hand. A little water is then put on their head, and they take their baths separately. After their bath is finished they perform *kusundika* ceremony if they happen to belong to a twice-born caste. In Sudra marriages *kusundika* ceremony does not take place, the *kusundika* is a purely *shastric* ceremony. It occupies some hours. Its duration depends upon the Veda according to which it is performed. Many *mantras* or incantations are uttered during *kusundika* and a *yajana* or burning of clarified butter takes places according to *shastric* rites. The *kusundika* sets the final seal of the *shastras,* as it were, to the marriage and makes it valid and binding on the practices. Although marriage without *kusundika* is no marriage at all, yet if a bridegroom dies before *kusundika* the bride is doomed to perpetual widowhood.

There is a ceremony called *kanakanjali.* It is performed just when the married couple are about to depart for their home in the afternoon or evening of the day after marriage. The bride winnows the earth, thrown out before a hole in which mice live, and takes a rupee, and offers them both to an elderly member of her house. The bride and the bridegroom are then seated together and *baran* is made in the usual way. This is parting ceremony and it is similar to the welcome *baran.* The lady, who gives the parting to bride, wipes her feet with the end of her cloth.

We next come to the bridegroom's house. The married couple have come and there is great rejoicing in the household. Ladies flock to the outer door. A pitcher of water is thrown under the conveyance, be it a palanquin or a carriage, that has brought in the married couple.

A little milk and *alta*, a solution of lac, are put into the stone plate. The bride stands with her left foot and palm uppermost on the head of the bride. The bride then holds a pitcher full of water in her left arm, and a fish with scales and a little ball of powdered rice paste in her left palm. The *baran* is then made to the married couple with the winnowing fan and the welcoming basket. The bridegroom holds on his palm which he has put on the head of the bride, a small basket for measuring and a vermilion holder. After the *baran* is over some sweets and *pan* are given to the married couple. A cloth is spcared right up to the room where the married couple are to sit. They walk slowly over it, just before entering the room, the bridegroom throws down the basket used for measuring rice, and the vermilion holder. The married couple are then seated on a mat, the ladies of the bridegroom's family put a little honey on to the ears of the bride, so that their words may sound sweet to her.

The third night after marriage is the night of *fulsajya* or flower bed. On that night the married couple are left to themselves, although eaves droppening goes on freely. Thus the uncontaminated *purausa* became enjoyer. This conceptual and imputed contract of *purasa* and *prakriti* is bondage. This is what the traditional Hindu does. Thus from what have been said so long one can find a sketchy picture about the folk-rites of women or *striachar* in Bengal. Before we come to the folk-rites of Orissan women let us describe the idea of an ideal wife.

Ideal wife :

An idcal wife is she who is to devote herself to her husband. She is personally to minister to his comforts at table, on his reaching home and so forth. She shares in her husband's fasts and vows, not brooking a refusal. She attends festivities, social gatherings, sacrifices, and religious processions, only with his permission. She engages in sports approved by him. That the husband might not find fault with her, she avoids the company of discreditable person at the door step, or in solitary places. She is not puffed up with prosperity, and she does not give charity to anyone without informing her husband. She honours her husband's friends, as is their due, with gifts of garlands, unguents, and toilet. She serves her father-in-law and mother-in-law and abides by their commands. When in their presence, she makes no replies, speaks few but sweet words, and does not laugh aloud. She engages servants in their proper work and honour them on festive occasions. Above all, when her husband is gone abroad she lives a life of ascetic restraint ; she gives up wearing all ornaments excepting *sankha*, the

marks of her married state; she engages in religious rites and fasts; she acts as a bidden by her superiors; she does not go out to visit her relations except on occasions of calamities or festivities. When she visits them, she does so only for a short while and in the company of her husband's people. When her husband returns home, she goes forth immediately to meet him in her sober dress, and then she worships the god and makes gifts.

Apart from attending to her husband and his parents, relations as well as his friends, the wife has complete and comprehensive charge of the household. She keeps the house absolutely clean, adorns it with festoons of flowers, and polishes the floor completely smooth. She looks after the worship of the gods at the household garden attached to the house, she plants beds of various vegetables, herbs, plants and trees, A woman who holds all these qualities is known as an ideal wife by a Hindu according to traditional idea.

Orissan Striachar:

Let us describe here some *Striachar* or the rites of the womenfolk as they are found in Orissa. The ninth and the tenth days after a marriage are deemed unfortunate in Orissa thus a bride shuts herself up in her room in her father-in-law's house for these days. The day she gets out of her room, she has to show a little molases to her neighbours and relations in the belief that as molasses tastes sweet so would her words sound sweet to her friends and neighbours, and no quarrel or brickering would mar the peace of her married life. In Bengal the whole of *Striachar* ceremony on the occasion of a marriage is directed to the end that the bridegroom might heareafter be under the thumb of his wife. *Striachar* is the customary rites which womenfolk follow over and above the *shastric* rules. In Bengal, it takes place in the bride's house and it is directed and controlled by relations, it is meant to make the bridegroom as much devoted to bride as possible. But in Orissa, the *striachar* takes its place in the bridegroom's house after the bride has come to her father-in-law's place. The whole *striachar* is directed to the bride so that she be a willing slave to her husband. She has to pick up seven *piras* (or wooden seats on which people sit) while taking their meals, and arrange them in order, after they have been carelessly kicked at by the bridegroom. She has to fill some pitchers with water which the bridegroom has kicked away and emptied. The bridegroom's younger brother gives her a rap with a bunch of thorns and she has to bear it with a smile. These contrast unfavourable with the *striachar* ceremony of Bengal where the bride-

groom is made to sit and rise seven times at the bidding of the bride and is asked to bray out when a shuttle is put into his hand. In Bengal, it is only when the bridegroom is going out to marry that his mother asks him what he is going to bring for her and the invariable reply on such an occasion is that it is a maid-servant that he is going to bring for the mother. Earlier we have discussed certain aspects of *striachar* of Bengal. This bit of *striachar* reminds one of the plight of the bride in her husband's family. But, on the whole, it is quite clear that in the *striachar* of Orissa the bridegroom's party seems to have the upperhand over the bride's party.

Fortunate woman :

Further, it is considered good for a Hindu woman to die before her husband ; for she is considered only as an instrument for the husband. If the husband dies first, a devoted wife may ends her life. This is the basis of the well-known *sati* system, the merit and demerit of which is proverbial and so many things have been written both by the eastern and western scholars on it. Then, the word *patni* is an aphorism which means "the contact which is established through marriage, sacrifice, etc. gives the woman wifehood" (Panini, IV, i, 33).

Mohini :

Thus when a woman dies a permature death without enjoying the full course of life, is changed into a devil or ghost according to folk-belief and she remains in that astral body till her term of years is over. Those that die an unnatural death by suicide or falling into a well etc., if females, are known as Mohinis, or she devils.

The belief about *Mohini,* she devil or spirit is almost universal. Let us describe few such examples here. It is a general belief that the male spirits and female sprits appear in cremation grounds, which are generally situated outside the village. Some of them are supposed to appear like men or women in their proper dimensions. Others again have an abnormally tall shape. They do not generally naked, but appear with a white cloth on.

Women, who dies during the life time of their husbands appear with red-bordered *sari.* Women spirits are dangerous ; those who have left children or died with a child in their womb are called *Chirsunies* or *pitasunies* in Oriya language. Women who dies during pregnancy reappear in the ceremation ground with their children, they give their children suck, affect to smear them with oil and turmeric and fondle them in various ways. If anybody goes near them, when they

are fondling their babies, he is sure to die. The spirits think that the man has come to rob them and of their babies and they pounce upon him.

Spirits in general, and women spirits in particular, evince a strong desire for fish. A fisherman who goes at night to catch fish often meets with women-spirits who beg of him to them a fish or two. If the man has the courage to refuse them and can brave their wrath, he can hope to effect a safe retreat. If on the contrary, he honours their request or succumbs to fear, he is gone.

In some parts of Orissa dead women who have left behind them children are given near their cremation ground *panai-kakharus* or pumpkins which they fondle as their babies at dead of night. These pumpkins, it is believed, do not rot so long as they receive caresses at night from the spirit.

Witchcraft :

Belief in witchcraft comes next in order, and it occasionally causes much suffering to the innocent. It is said by some that witchcraft comes with birth owing to the influence of the stars. But there seems to be a contrary opinion about it. Like a bad habit witchraft is learnt early in life and it grows with years. The woman who practices it loses all control over herself and cannot rid herself of it. The whole of witchcraft consists in a string of incantation which the witch apprentice learns by heart. Witches in a body go to the outside of the village at dead of night, strip themselves off and feed on human diet with their heads down and heels up in the air. This dirty habit, though highly reprehensible, is not all that brings the witch sisterhood into odium. The most pernicious thing about the witches in popular superstition is that they happen to cast an evil eye on all lovely babies that come in their way. The moment a witch sees a lovely baby, she mutters to herself her fatal incantations, with the result that the baby withers and dies within a couple of days or so. Even the witch's own baby is not free from danger on this score. In a fit of momentary oblivion the witch forgets that it is her own darling praises its beauty and looks straight in the face and the fatal incantations rise to her lips inspite of herself and the fate of the baby is sealed all glance. Witches which are befooled by the access of the witch doctors often confess their sins and make a solemn promise to live a pure life. But nothing short of this utmost humiliation can cure the witches of their evil habit. Not only babies, but every good and healthy pet, such as a cage bird, a cat or a kitten is liable to fall a

victim to a witchcraft and has to be guarded against it. The dust broom which sweeps away all dirt and rubbish is the dread of the witches, so much so that if a small bit of it is attached to the neck of a baby by rag or string, the baby can go to a witch and who is unable to do any worse to it. Some say that the evil eye exists even in the mind of the parents and when they think their babies are lovely and take pride in them, the babies get sick mysteriously all on a sudden.

Here an illustration may be cited from a traditional literature which we meet in the popular superstitions and nursery tales of Bengal. In such tales one can find that witches fly by night on trees that move at their command. Let us describe an incident which is connected with witchcraft. A Santal family consisting of husband and wife and their boy aged about five years lived peacefully in a village. It so happened that the boy began to pine away for nothing, and the father took it into his head that his wife had learnt something of witchcraft which she was practising upon her own son. He had his suspicion only but he could not speak of his mind to his wife. A mango tree that stood near his house for long time suddenly died out as if smiteen by a bolt from the blue. This was a deciding factor and the father gave out to the villagers that his son was pining away as his wife was practising her witchcraft on him. A *gunin* (witch doctor) was called, and the *gunin* while uttering his incantations threw some mustard seeds on the head of the wife. The woman winced in pain and make her confession by bits. She confessed herself a witch and showed her precious substances—human hair and nails in an earthen pot buried deep beneath a cross-road. She vowed up her evil practice and some sort of reconciliation was patched up between the husband and the wife. But the cloud between the husband and the wife never lifted, and after a short while the husband divorced his wife and went away elsewhere with his son. In this way a happy home was broken up owing to witchcraft.

Sneeze :

Here is a curious myth on the sneeze of a man. When a man sneezes, if his mother is near by, she taps her fingers and says aloud, "Live long my darling". From this has grown up a curious myth. It is said that Yama, the God of Death, once took away the soul of a beautiful boy. The spirit of the boy had strong longing for its home and it requested Yama's mother to send it back to its home. Yama's mother knew that this was not at all possible, so she resorted to a stratagey. When Yama was taking his meal, Yama's mother had the spirit of the boy near about and asked it to sneeze. It did as it was bid ; and Yama's

mother thinking that her own son had sneezed, uttered the usual blessing. When it was found out that the spirit had sneezed and not Yama, his mother took her stand on the blessing of a goddess and requested her son to send the spirit back to life most reluctantly. Mothers to this day remembering this incident deem it a good omen if their sons sneeze over their plate of rice and give them an additional handful to ensure long life.

Household Superstitions :

We will relate here a few household superstitions that are connected with the womenfolk. Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, is worshipped in all Hindu households. The month specially set apart for her worship is the month of *Agrahayan* (November-December). The easternmost room of the southern row in the house is set apart for her worship. In Karan families a Brahman priest is not called to worship her. The worship is very simple, and it takes place on fourth Thursdays of the month of Agrahayan. It is carried over to the month of Magh (January-February) if par chance the puja is not held four times in the month of Agrahayan owing to a death or a birth in the family. A plank is decorated with various drawings with a solution of rice paste. On it is poured one *gauni* (3 to 5 seers according to local measures) of unhusked rice. A small vessel of cane which is localy known as *ser* with mango twigs on its head is placed on the rice. A few rupees or a gold *mohur* is put into the *ser*. It is decorated with vermilion and a new *sari* preferable of red colour or a white *sari* with red border. This is an emblematic representation of the goddess Lakshmi. The worship starts offering fruits and flowers and various kinds of rice cakes and sweets to the goddess. *Lakshmi Mahamaya*, a book that contains the rules and tales as to how the worship of the Goddess Lakshmi was spread throughout is then read aloud to the ladies of the household. It also recounts what Lakshmi did many many years ago and it is listened to with rap attention. The *ser* is then fallen out at nightfall after offering some light refreshment to it. This *ser*, it may mentioned, is worshipped as the symbol of Lakshmi. Women in the respectable Karan families do not take fish on the days appointed for the worship of the goddess. They also do not take any bitter vegetable, e.g. bitter, on those days. It is supposed that Lakshmi deserts household if the members happen to quarrel always. No wearing cloth or napkin is allowed to dry on the door leaves, because it might pollutte the goddess when she enters the house. The sight of ladies walking on their tipots is highly repugnant to the goddess. He

who burns *dhup* or *dip* (just as candle light), is supposed to draw Lakshmi to her household.

The cooking room is an important place for the ladies of the house. In it they have to spend a good deal of their time. In every cooking room of a Karan family a place is set apart of *Barabarihs* i.e., the spirits of ancestors. It is a small rised platform of earth inside which new earthen pot is buried containing the sacred things of the family e.g. dust of seven famous places of pilgrimage. The pot also contains some rare coins which have been the heirloom of the family. A bit of gold is also put into it. Before the daily food is taken out of the kitchen and distributed, the lady who cooks the food for the day offers it to the *Barabarihs* or the spirits of the departed ancestors. The *Barabarihs* are also remembered on all ceremonial occasions, e.g., marriage, feasts, or customary feedings of relations after a period of mourning has expired. Formerely it was customary with all ladies in charge of cooking in Karan families not to chew betel inside the kitchen as chewing betel was not in keeping with the dignity of the ancestors.

Raja Sankrati :

We would also mention in this connection curious custom observed during Raja Sankranti. The Raja Sankranti begins on the last but one day of the month of Jaistha (May-June) and ends with the first day of Ashar (June-July). It is supposed that the earth is in her yearly course of these days and so these days are days of fasting. No young woman or girl even walks the earth on her bare feet on these days. The bark of the betel nut tree is extemporised into a pair of slippers which every young lady puts on during these three days. Ploughing. weeding and hoeing are strictly forbidden for Raja-Sankranti which invariably falls on the first day of Ashar every year.

Inkpat :

There are other curious customs which are interesting to note. It is deemed almost a sin to put the pen into an inkpot without writing anything. If after writing out anything the pen is allowed to remain dipped in the pot, it is supposed to get rusty and it won't write freely. All writings in the world are said to be the children of the pen and the inkpot. Prose is their son and poetry their daughter and it is being taught by the womenfolk to their offsprings from the very childhood.

Dhenki :

Then there is a common belief about the *Dhenki* or rice husking-machine that the villagers use. It is considered by them as an important

implement. One day during the month of Bhadra (September-October) the head of the *Dhenki* is worshipped by small boys and girls. The day of worship is called *Khudrakani Osa.* Various offerings are also made on these days to the husking machine of the family; the *Khudrakani Osas* are days of mirth and play for all small boys and girls. The worship of the Dhenki is supposed to ensure a life of prosperity to small boys and girls. Girls make it a point to observe the *Osa* because they believe that the observers of the *Osa* expedite their marriages in rich families, and they are never in want. Preparation for various kinds of rice-cakes is an important duty of the housewives on this occasion. Powered rice, cocoanut kernel and various kinds of grains are made into a paste and the paste is then made into a shape and boiled in steam. It is believed that the cakes wont boil nicely if they are touched by a woman who has not changed her cloth after coming from the privy or who is otherwise unclean. This superstition is meant to ensure utmost cleanliness of the kitchen.

Sathi Ghar

The curry stones which is popularly known as *Pata-puta* in Bengal, have also a peculier superstition about them. A man who breaks them accidentally is considered as an unlucky person. The smaller curry stone which is used as pestle is worshipped on the sixth day after the brith of a child in *Sathi Ghar* or *Sasthi Ghar.* It is covered with a piece of yellow cloth and placed in a spot marked out by earth and decorated with twentyone pieces of *Kauries.* A steel stylo and a piece of palm leaf is also placed inside the *Sathi Ghar.* On this palm leaf the horoscope of the child is written out by the astrologer on the twelfth day after the birth of a baby; the pestle stone is worshipped on the sixth day by seven married women as *Sasthi* and rice cakes with fruit and flowers are offered to it.

Dudhataran:

The ceremony that lead up to *Sathi Ghar* commences on the fourth day after birth. This is called *Dudhataran.* On that day seven married women prepare a pecular kind of food together in proper proportions. They take it out and make ovations to it. It is said that this ceremony increases the milk of the mother.

Hensuati:

The next day, that is the fifth day after birth, the grandfather of the baby makes a rope with *Tandi* or *Banagrass* while chewing fried rice. This is called *Hensuati;* the rope is then worshipped by seven

married women then fried rice, molasses, and sweets are offered to it. It is said that *Hensuati* worship give the child a long lease of life. On this occasion fried rice, sweets etc. are freely distributed to neighbours. The last or final ceremony in connection with the birth of a child takes place on the 21st days after birth. It is a day of feasting, the maternal uncle of the boy sends presents according to his means. At night the worship of Satya-narayn is performed and the child is brought out and blessed by all relations present on the spot.

Kuarpurnima :

Unmarried girls all over Orissa worship the moon on *Kuarpurnima* night. The worship is held with great jubilation and feasting. Rich parents spend lavishly on the occasion and unmarried girls, however poor her parents be, beg a piece of new cloth on the occasion. The worship is however very simple. It starts with the rising of the moon. The moment of moon rises, the sacred basil tree is worshipped by a Brahman. All unmarried girls of the family come out to the basil tree and offer *Arghya* (offerings) to the moon. Fired rice, the kernel of cocoanut finely scraped out, plantains and sauces are made into the thick mixture and offered to the Moon on *Jhinga* leaves. It is popularly supposed that the Moon ensures good bridegrooms for all girls who do the worship of Kuarpurnima night. The flowers of Jhinga are the favourite of the Moon. Girls make it a point to offer these flowers to the Moon at the time of worship. These flowers naturally bloom just at sunnset and their bright yellow colour might have recommended them as favourite flower of the Moon.

By all these what have been said above a critical reader may get an image of the womenfolk as it is protrayed in *striachar*, ghost belief, witchcraft and in some popular superstitions and beliefs. But it should be remembered here that in a vast country like India it is easy to pick up some one aspect here and there and generalize from it. Like the Hindus, Muslim women have also their own rites, beliefs, superstitions and customs which have been left out from this study for obvious reason.

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K. Radha Krishna Murty

TELUGU WOMEN IN THE FOLK-SAYINGS

To understand the pattern of the home and the family, it is necessary to know the women of a community. Here is an attempt to study the Telugu women from oral traditional materials.

I

Folk-sayings are the creation of a number of intelligent men and women in the society in some particular situation. These sayings belong to a particular person, and are so remarkable that people remembered and employ them in connection with any man in the same situation. The immense value of folksayings or proverbs is to educate the people. Besides they reflect the wisdom of the creator and pass on from generation to generation. According to Kunjabehari Das "A proverb displays sharp intelligence, broad outlook, strong common-sense, power of generalisation and the intimate knowledge of life and the living world". Thus, in their own way, proverbs are the mirror of the society, through which we may probably feel the pulse of the people's life, their cultural ethos, their innermost experiences and intimate values. These intangible aspects of a community's life are more vividly brought out and portrayed in proverbs. They are the treasure of community's experiences and expressions, thought patterns and value systems, ways and views of life. Hence, time and again, sociologists have employed proverbs as a tool and technique of studing traditional and transitional communities and cultures.

In Andhra Pradesh scholars and analysts of Telugu literature have compiled and interpreted proverbs. But their interpretations have been inspired mostly by the literary interest and biases. They are not conducted from a sociological angle and orientation. Indeed they themselves suggested that this sociological approach was a significant omission in their works, reducing the scientific value of their studies, commendable otherwise. Hence, here an attempt is made in a modest spirit to make and present a sociological analysis of the folk-sayings of Andhra Pradesh, where women as depicted in the folk-sayings of Andhra Pradesh are discussed.

In the Hindu sacred literature woman is accorded an exalted position and a role charged with vital obligations and resposibilities. In status, she is the empress of the domestic world (K. M. Kapadia) and in devotion she is an angel of service. To Manu, "where the woman is respected and worshipped, the Gods live there". She is an indispensable complement to her husband not only for procreation (Praja) but also for pursuit of social and spiritual obligations. (Dharma). To highlight this very notion, she is rightly called the "half-body" (Ardhangi). Manu regards the unmarried or single person as incomplete for want of his "Ardhangi". Several *sutra* writers prohibit performing of certain rituals and Yajnas without the wife accompaying as coperformer. If the wife is dead, her golden image is put there to represent her. In the absence of his wife, the father cannot perform the "Kanya Danam" i.e. the ritual of giving away the bride to the bridegroom. So woman is a necessary compliment to her husband in every walk of life. She is an uncompromising conscience-keeper, who like the great "Sita" of the Epic Ramayana, may function as the family's custodian of Dharma. She is not only the husband's consort and confidente (Sakhi) but also his life companion and wise counsellor (Sachivah). She is the patience incarnate and a harbinger of blessings to the family. Sweet in tongue, modest in manners, unsparing in service, unflinching in loyalty, she is the venerable exemplar of good conduct in the house. Living within the four walls of the house she can manage its affairs quite well and so she is the mistress there.

A woman who fails to bring forth the children is treated in ridiculous light. Sterility is her social stigma and causes heavy psychological damage to her personality. Failure to bringforth a male issue is likewise denigrated and entitles her husband to taking a second wife after a reasonable period of waiting. Upholding of family traditions (*Kulaparampara*) and redeeming of the five debts (*rinas*) depend upon, and require a male issue to the couple and hence failure to beget a son is a serious default and deficiency—all for no fault of her. Again a son is preferred to a daughter because he always remains with his parents, and continues the family line. But Manu regards the daughter "as an object of highest tenderness".

दुहित. कृपण परमु*

She is to be brought up with as much affection and care as is bestowed upon the male child, rather greater kindness is to be shown to her as she is physically more tender and her emotions too are more delicate.

Woman is given freedom of make choice of divorce and of re-

*Manu Dharmasastra IV page 185.

marriage and even some property rights. But many social restraints and taboos beset and circumscribe her life and movement and rigid conformity of norms is enjoined upon her. Strict watch and vigil over the woman is emphasised lest she be betrayed into paths of licentious and disloyalty. Thus, Manu lays down in unambiguous terms that the woman is for ever in need of watch and control and prescribes that she be protected and controlled in her childhood by her father and by the husband after marriage, and by her sons in old age. These are some ideas which we gather from the ancient *sastraic* literature regarding the position and life of woman.

II

It is very interesting to find identical or analogous ideas about the nature and position of woman as depicted in various proverbs. A few of the most illustrative folk-sayings are selected here for the purpose of drawing the parallels between the sacred *sastraic* literature and the popular folk-sayings.

Andhra Pradesh with patriarchal organisation places more importance and weight on the birth of a son. From the child the woman is socialised to subordinate to the man. As a daughter she is expected to obey family members. This trend is clearly reflected in the sayings and other contents of folklore. The following proverbs reveal some attitudes towards the female child in the society.

Abadhealadite Aadapillalu Pudataru
(Those who speak lies will give birth to daughter)

Aadachetta Magabangaramu
(Female child is nonsense, male is gold).

Aadadai Puttekante Adavilo Mranai Puttedi Meelu
(Better be born in the jungle as a tree trunk than be born as a woman).

This is to give an idea how difficult in all aspects, life would be for a woman due to the enormous responsibilities and duties she has to shoulder and shoulder successfully too.

Aswamedha Yagamaina Cheyavachugani, Aadapilla Pelli Cheyalemu
(One can perform even "Aswamedha Yaga" easily but not the marriage of a daughter).

Ammayi Puttindi Ante Aayuvu Sagam Kungindi Annadata
(A woman said, that her halt life is over when she heard the news of her female issue).

The first and foremost important duty on entering her new home, would be to exert towards adapting herself to the traditions and sentiments of the house of which she becomes a member. She must do her utmost towards conducting the family affairs efficiently by keeping under control her speech, thought and actions. As a daughter-in-law the woman has to deal with many persons and maintain balance of relationships with them at her in-law's house. She is described as a more quiet, more calm and more integrated woman in the family circle. She has more duties and obligations to perform in the family namely social, religious and economic. Telugu folk-sayings indicate two main hindrances for the supreme position of the daughter-in-law—(1) her "Adapaduchu" (husband's sister) and (2) her mother-in-law. The daughter-in-law wants power, authority, responsibility and honour, besides the power of administering the entire family which the mother-in-law enjoys. Finally with the death of mother-in law, the daughter in-law gets her position, her rights and obligations in the family. The following are the proverbs which show the attitudes of daughter-in-law in the family.

Athaku Naku Aram Beram, Atma Nethukupo Mutyalamma
Athanethukupote Aarugalla Jeevanni Arpisthnu.

(It is impossible to live in peace with my mother-in-law. Oh! My patrorn Goddess, if you take her away, I would go to the extent of sacrificing to you a six leg creature [which is impossible to find].

Atha Chachina Aaru Masalaku Dodali Kanta Neeru Vachindata

(A daughter-in-law sheds tears, six months after the demise of her mother-in-law).

Atha Manchi, Vemu Theepi Ledu

(Neither good mother-in-law, nor sweet neem exists).

Atha Leni Kodaluthamaralu, Kodalu Leni Atha Gunavanturalu

(A daughter-in-law is always good and noble if she has no mother-in-law. And a mother-in-law who has no daughter-in-law always behaves virtuously).

Atha Kalamu Konnallu, Kodali Kalam Konnallu

(The reign of the mother-in-law is for some years, and the reign of the daughter-in-law is for next some years).

Thus struggle for supremacy and power in the family is powerfully depicted in the folk sayings. While living in joint family is the ideals of the Hindus, day to day frictions in it between the various members are quite common. The common folk are cognizant of the fact. Accordingly, the folklore depicts the possible dissentions. The following are the sayings which depict the general nature of woman

Asuya Mundu Aadadi Venuka

(Woman is so jealous, she is preceeded by jealously everywhere. As Shakespeare puts it, "Frailty—thy name is woman.")

Aadadani Bratuku Arataku Vantidi

(Woman's life is as delicate as that of a plantain leaf).

That is to say, it is the leaf that bears the brunt, whether it falls on a thorn, or a thorn falls on it.

Aadadani Mata Aapadalaku Moolamu

(Woman's word is the root cause of all evils, troubles and dangers).

Similar idea can be traced out in the statement of Couley—"But what is woman ? Only one of nature's agreeable blunders".

Aadadanini Choochina Ardhanni Choochina Brahmakaina Puttu Rimma Tegulu

(Woman and money tempt even "Brahma" the creator. This is to say woman and money are the source of all evils).

Lastly the following folk-sayings deal with the image of mother and the importance of a son.

Tolakarini Cheruvu Nindina, Toluchuri Koduku Puttina Labham

(If a tank fills in the early rains, or the first born is a son, it is a great gain).

And next,

Putti Chachina Putrude Melu

(Son is best eventhough he died at the moment of his birth).

III

Besides folksayings, we many also get a picture about the position and status of the Telugu women if we care to study Telugu folksongs. Following is an example where the position of a barren woman is faithfully depicited.

Kotha Chintapandu Gonella Cheku,
Godrali Vastralu Pettella Cheku
Pata Chintapandu Bastala Chivuku
Balenta Vastralu Pasupulla Chivuku
Kodukula Gananivalla, Kadupemi Kadupu
Kulamudharinchani Kodukemi Koduku
Pidikedu Vithanalu Madikella Chalu
Vakkade Kodukaina Vamsana Chalu

(Just as fresh tamarind eats aways its gunny container, a sterile woman's clothes erode the iron container. Auspicious are the mothers and their wear who bore children, call them what you may, the families that born no offspring. Rail the son who fails or shirks to feed and rend, just one son enough for the family, as a fistful of seed. Suffice a large field).

The above song and sayings clearly reflect the derogatory attitude of people towards a sterile woman who fails to procreate and thus maintain family line. Glorious tribute is paid to a woman who bears children. A mother is the very embodiment of the Goddess "Kali", also called "Prakriti" which symbolises the cosmic activity. A mother is treated as an auspicious person and her blessings are invoked on many occasions. Some people even refuse to take food from the hands of a woman who is not a mother. The mother's importance, comes to a climatic height at the time of the celebration of the Upanayana ceremony for the son. The first ritual alms are preferred by the mother only, to the initiate. In order to attain motherhood, it is common for the mother in the Andhra families to make her newly-wed daughter, perform a series of rites called the "Gaurinomu" and the "Varalakshminomu" at regular prescribed periods. The underlying belief is that there rites bringsforth peace, plenty, progeny and prosperity.

Motherhood is the eternal bliss of a woman's life. So sterile women go to any length and undergo hard ascetic life like prolonged fasting and other types of self mortifications. These women give enormous charities, frequently go on pilgrimages and invoke the blessings of a variety of deities to be able to bear children and escape, the social and psychological oppression. These beliefs, attitudies and value orientations are implicitly or explicitly stated in many other folk-sayings and songs.

Institution of polygyny is popularly expressed in Telugu folk-sayings. The co-wife (Savati) is treated and described as a woman full of rivalry and jealousy. She is seldom picturised as a cooperating one, identified or integrated with the interests and traditions of the family. This is due to her very existence is based on competition to win her husband's love and affection. The following sayings reveal the unwantedness of co-wife and her attitudes towards the family members.

Rendulla Vyavasyamu, Iddaru Bharyalu Cherupu
(Farming in two villages and having two wives are always bad).

Paleru Vaniki Godlu Poyina, Marutalliki Bidda Poyina Dukhamu Ledu

(The death of the cattle matters nothing to the farm servants, nor the death of the child to its step mother).

Matalu Talli Matalu, Pettu Savati Talli Pettu
(Words are of mother, treatment is of step mother).

Thus to conclude, proverbs reveal the inner feelings and aspirations of the women-folk. Through them, the actual and real life of women,

the domestic quarrels between the in-laws, leadership pattern, struggle for power and supremacy, authority and other types of conflict in the home, would be better understood.

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PURNIMA SINHA

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC OF NORTH INDIA

This is the fourth of a series of seven articles to be published serially in this paper.

The musical instruments of India may be divided into the following three groups: (i) wind, (ii) string and (iii) percussion. The contemporary forms of musical instruments of North India are briefly described in the present article. Sketches of the principal instruments used in modern India are given in Fig 1. Detailed description and photographs are given by Day (1891) and Sengupta (1959).

(1) *Shanai: Shanai* is one of the most popular wind instruments of North India. It is a conical wooden pipe with brass mouthpiece. The pipe contains twelve holes, seven of which are used for playing the melody and the remaining five are selectively sealed with wax to control the pitch. The recital of *Shanai is* an essential part of any Hindu or Muslim marriage in India and is always played by the Muslims. The melodic pattern is played on one *Shanai* and another *Shanai* is played as a background drone of tonic. It needs a lot of strength of the lungs to play this instrument.

On a day of marriage, on a temporary balcony structure they start playing on the *Shanai* early in the morning with some early morning *raga*, and go on playing the *ragas* appropriate for the time of the day and play sad tunes during the departure of the bride. The sound of *Shanai*[1] reminds us of festivity. I do not know what effect it will have on western audience.

(2) Flute: Indian flute is made by making holes on a thin hollow bamboo stick. You can compare the tonal quality of the flute[2] with that of *Shanai*. The latter has more rounded and smooth tonal quality, more resembling the human voice.

(3) *Sarengee* is a bowed string instrument made of hollow wood. The lower part of the resonator is covered by leather. The melody is played on four catgut strings and there are many resonating strings made of brass. The instrument is generally played as an accompaniment to vocal music. As the vocalist goes on improvising during the performance, the *Sarengee* player goes on copying it.[3]

(4) The most important plucked string instrument in North India is the *Sitar,* which is a modification of the ancient instrument, *Veena. Veena*

is still the most important plucked string instrument of South India. The *Veena* consists of a hollow wooden stem attached to two hollow gourd resonators at both the ends. The front part of the lower and the main resonator is made of wood. There are twenty-two fixed frets attached to the stem in positions corresponding to the natural, sharp and flat notes. There are four strings for playing the melody and three additional strings for indicating rhythm. The essential difference between *Veena* and *Sitar* is that the frets in the latter are movable. The position of the frets can be adjusted before each performance, according to the notes required for playing different *ragas*. *Sitar* is generally smaller is size than the *Veena*. The later modification of the *Sitar* contains many resonating strings in addition to the seven strings, which gives a richer tonal quality. The difference in the tonal quality and style of playing between the two instruments will be apparent if one listens to recital of *Veena*[4] and *Sitar*.[5,6]

(5) Another popular plucked string instrument of North India is *Swarode*. It is a modification of the instrument called *Rabab*. The body of the *swarode* is made of hollow wood with narrow stem and a broad semi-spherical resonator. The resonator is covered with leather and the front part of the stem is made of steel. It contains seven strings for playing the melody and ten resonating strings.[7]

(6) *Tambura: Tambura* is played as a background drone with any kind of vocal and instrumental music. The body of the *tambura* is similar to that of *Veena,* without any fret in the stem. There are only four strings on the stem. The sequence of tuning of the strings is $GC^1C^1C^2$, where C is the tonic. For other choice of the tonic the turning is properly transposed. The four strings are successively pulled with fore and middle fingers producing the above notes and their overtones, which creates a background for playing all the principal notes of a melodic pattern.

(7) The most important percussion instrument of North India is *Tabla* which is a modification of the ancient instrument *Mridanga,* which is still the most important percussion instrument of South India. The *Mridanga* is a barrel shaped drum, about two feet long, made of hollow wood, with one end slightly wider than the other. The girth at the centre is about nine inches. The two ends are covered with parchment, which is tightened and loosened by leather braces enclosing small cylindrical blocks of wood, which is either pushed nearer to or further from the head that is being tuned. At the centre of one of the heads there is a black circular patch about one eighth inch thick, made with a paste of manganese dust, boiled rice and tamarind juice. This loading makes the characteristic musical tonal quality of the instrument.

The *tabla* is practically a *Mridanga* divided into two parts. The two

heads being one on each of the two drums. One of the drums, played with the fingers of the right hand, is called *tabla* and the other played with the left hand is called *baya*. The body of the *tabla* is scooped out of a barrel shaped piece of wood and *baya*, the brass drum is of the shape of a cup made of terracotta or brass.

The rhythmic pattern is built up by various types of distribution of accents on and off beat, and different ways of clustering of varying number of syllables and also by the distribution of long and short syllables.

In a performance of vocal or instrumental music *tabla* has a subordinate role to play. The tempo and the division of bars of the beat cycle is determined by the theme of the musical composition. There may be different types of distribution of the beat cycles. Some examples of the different beat cycles used in North Indian music are given below:

1. *Trital* : 16 beats divided as 4/4/4/4
2. *Choutal* : 12 beats divided into 6 bars as 2/2/2/2/2/2
3. *Ektal* : 12 beats divided into 4 bears as 3/3/3/3
4. *Dhamar* : 14 beats divided into 2 bars as 7/7
5. *Jhaptal* : 10 beats divided into 2 bars 5/5

Examples of simpler forms of beat cycles are *Dadra*—3/3 or *Kaharva* 4/4.

Once the beat cycle is started, it goes on and on with the same tempo throughout the composition until the vocalist or the instrumentalist goes on to the third movement and indicates the new tempo. The tempo grows faster and faster in steps. Within the framework of the beat cycle, both the vocalist and the *tabla* player goes on improvising different combinations of rhythmic patterns; each pattern being calculated in such a way that the pattern is complete on the last beat of the cycle and the regular beating can be started from the first beat.

Tabla may also be played as a solo instrument, when a string or wind instrument is used as accompaniment. In that case the accompanying instrument plays a melodic theme over and over again just to indicate the tempo and the nature of the beat cycle. The *tabla* player makes variations and development of rhythmic patterns on some suitable rhythmic theme within the framework of the beat cycle indicated by the accompanying instrument .

The basic units for forming the rhythmic patterns are different types of characteristic sounds produced by different ways of striking the two drums. These units are represented by symbols like *Dha, Dhin, Ta, Kat* etc., which are like morphemes (without any meaning) which from sentences of rhythmic patterns on the *tabla*. One example of a pattern set on *trital* is given below:

1(+) 2 3 4 5

Kat tete thun tete gadi ghene nag tete ghentere keletak

6 7 8 9 10 11

tatere keletak takkran dha tere kete dhet takenne dha dha

12 13 14 15 16 1 (+)

tereketa dhet takenne dha dha tere kete dhet takenne dha

The following extracts from records of solo tabla performances represent the Delhi[8] and Benaras[9] style respectively *

As in the case of vocal music the common belief is that the important forms and styles have been developed by Tansen and his descendants through the male and female lines.

Genealogical chart ** of important figures in the development of instrumental music of North India is given in Table 1.

Two of the most important styles of playing of string instruments in North India today are named after *Uzir Khan* and *Imdad Khan*. The most important exponents of *Uzir Khani* style at present are *Hafiz Ali Khan*, *Allauddin Khan* and his descendants and disciples. *Allauddin Khan*, the court musician of *Maihar* State is now above 90 years. When he was a little boy he left home and went around different parts of India to get good training in music. He learnt many forms of instrumental and also vocal music, but had a very hard time in persuading different musicians to take him as a disciple. Ultimately he received his final training from *Uzir Khan* of *Rampur*. *Allauddin* is a gifted music teacher. Among his disciples, his own son Ali Akbar, (*swarode* player) daughter Annapurna (*surbahar* and *sitar* player), son-in-law Ravishankar (*sitar* player) and Nikhil Banerjee (*sitar* player) are some of the leading instrumental musicians of India to-day.

Imdad Khan: Saheb Singh, the father of Imdad Khan received his musical training from two of the very famous musicians Haddu Khan and Hassu Khan. Imdad Khan became the most important exponent of sitar in his time. He was the court musician of the Raja of Benaras, and was brought to Calcutta by Raja Jyotirindra Mohun Thakur. Practicing music was considered to be a form of prayer to God and was valued above everything in life. There is a story about Imdad Khan that when

* The Delhi style, known as *'Bandh Baj'* is characterised by strokes producing a suppressed vibration of the membrane. The Benaras style, known as *'Khula Baj'* have strokes with the tonal quality of free vibration of the membrane.

** Taken from *"Bharatiya Badya Jantra"* by J. M. Sen (in Bengali), and *"Bharatiya Sangeeter Katha"* by P. Goswami (in Bengali).

he was practising music on one evening, his daughter died, and people came to call him to take care of the funeral. He said "please wait for a while, I am not through my prayer yet. You arrange for the funeral." Before his death, he called his two sons and said to them, "I have learnt many *ragas* throughout my life, but concentrated on only two *ragas*, but the absolute vision of those two *ragas* are not yet clear to me. I have failed to achieve anything. If I could live for one hundred more years I could perhaps have done something."

His son *Enayet Khan* was unequestionably the most reknowned sitarist of the last generation. He was the court musician of the Zeminder of Gouripur of East Bengal.

When *Enayet Khan* died in 1940, his son *Vilayet Khan* was only 10 years old. But he was already well known as a *sitar* player. Today he is one of the leading exponents of *sitar* in India.

Styles of playing of percussion instruments :

It is said that around 1296-1312, Amir Khasru, a very famous musician of the court of Allauddin Khilji first divided *Mridanga* into too parts *tabla* and *baga*. This innovation was popularised and improved later on by *Abed Hussain Khan* of Lucknow around 18th/19th centuries. There are important schools of *tabla* in *Delhi*, *Punjab*, *Lucknow* and *Benaras*. Delhi probably represents the original *tabla* style. In *Punjab*, the style of playing is more like that of *Mridanga ;* in *Benaras* and *Lucknow* dance motifs have been introduced in the compositions of *tabla*.

As in the case of vocal music, the authenticity of the history of the evolution of the instruments and styles are questionable, but on interviewing any musician one would obtain almost the same kind of informations. Thus the common beliefs presented above are important because those beliefs help to keep the different groups of musicians together.

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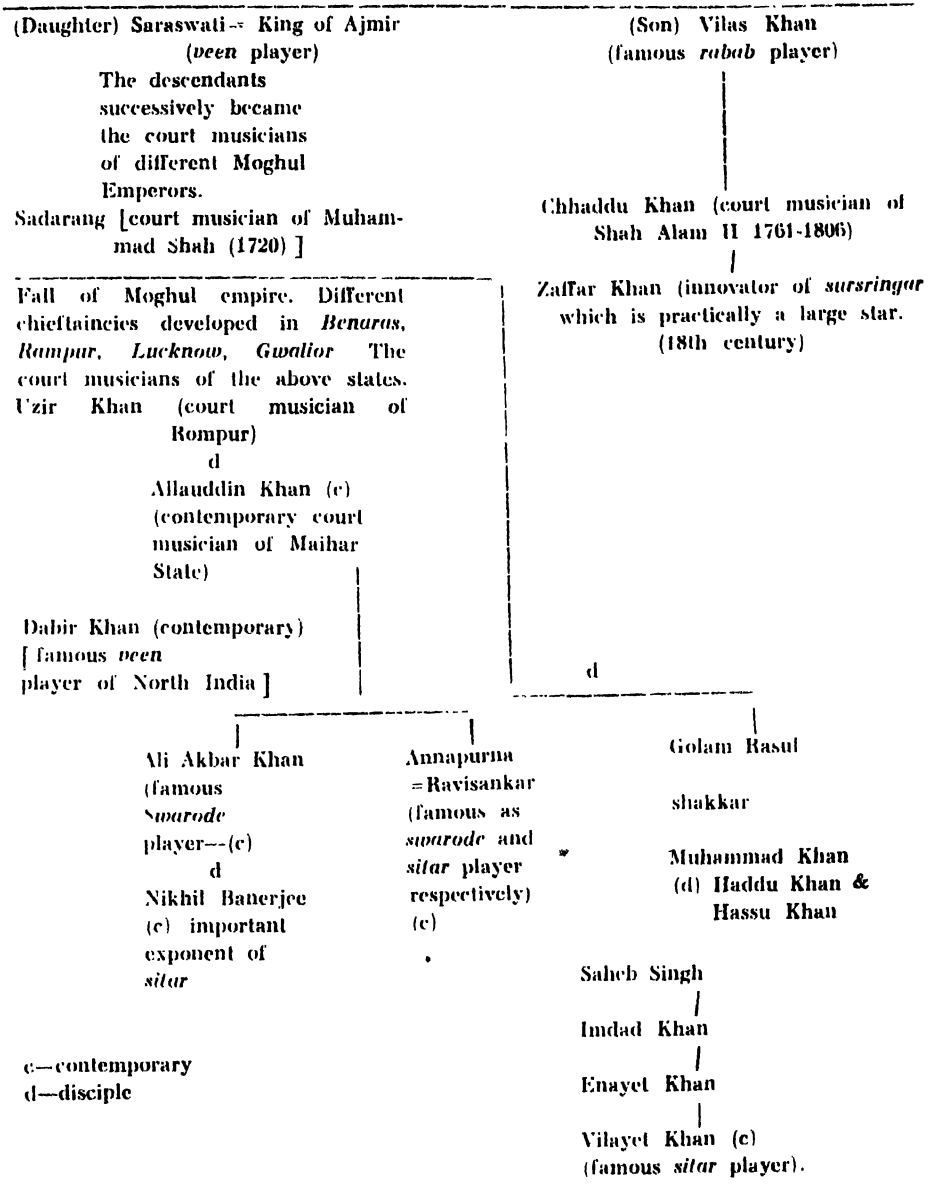
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Table :1 Genealogical Chart

Tansen—[chief court musician of Akbar (1556-1605) famous as a vocal musician and a *veena* player, innovator of different forms of music and the instrument *rabab*.]



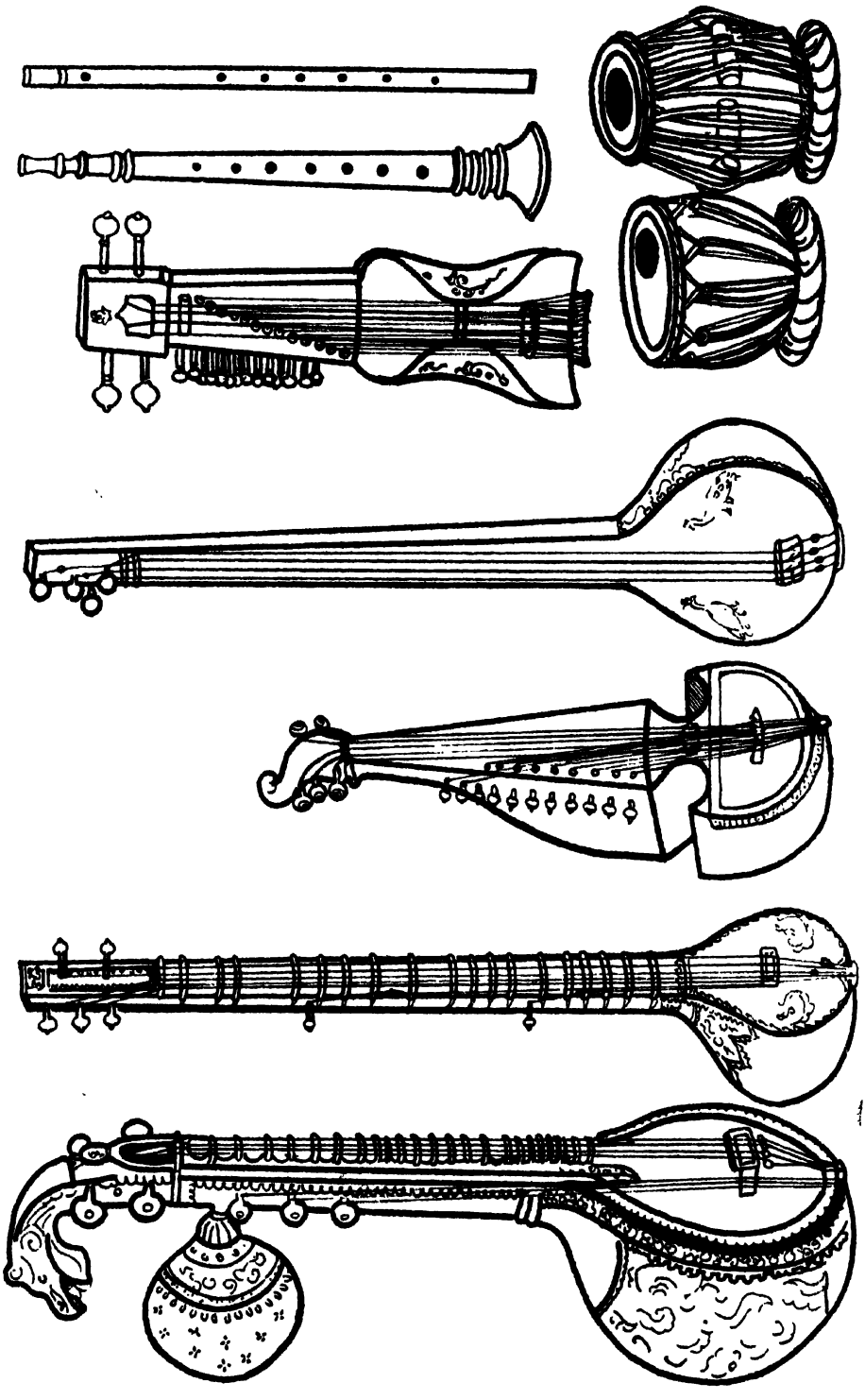

Shanai Flute
Tabla
Sarengee
Baya
Tumbura
Swarode
Sitar
Veena

Fig. 1.

ASUTOSH BHATTACHARYA

SNAKE-DEITIES OF BENGAL

Prof. Dr. Asutosh Bhattacharya needs no introduction. Here he has treated serpent-cult as it is available in different parts of Bengal—East Pakistan and West Bengal. In some earlier issues of this journal he described this cult with a greater details.

The civilized world has not the relation which the society of primitive man had the world of beasts. In the pre-historic age man and beast were constant neighbours and each endeavoured to hold his own against the other. At a time when owing to the laws of worldly changes men felt impotent to protect themselves, yet living in habitations surrounded by forests they could not remove to a far distance from the contact of beasts, they sought to save themselves by supernatural means. It was in consequence thereof that they conceived of particular deities indwelling particular beasts and tried to propitiate the outrageous beasts by worshipping the deities supposed to preside over them.

Serpent : Of all animals held in worship in different parts of India the serpent is the most important. Its cult is widely distributed throughout the whole of India from Kashmir in the North to Cape Comorine in the South. The cult as prevalent in Bengal is somewhat different in character from it is in the other parts of North India. Among the common run of people both in Bengal and in the South the cult has retained its primitive character to a very great extent. Roughly speaking in North India the image of a serpent considered male in character and known as Nagaraja or the king of the snakes is held in worship and in the South it is the living snakes to whom worships are offered. Instead of the image of the 'king of the serpents' and the living snakes an anthropomorphic serpent goddess known as Manasa is worshipped in Bengal. An exclusive cult known as the Manasa-cult has developed in this part of the country and it is highly popular among all sections of the Hindus though more so among the lower classes in some areas. The rites as observed in connection with the worship of the serpent-goddess Manasa are widely different in the different parts of Bengal, but from a careful analysis of them it would be clear that they have originated from a common source. The elements of difference which have developed in the meantime are nothing but local factors and as such have no intrinsic relationship with the fundamental factors.

Of all the places in Bengal the area covered by the district of Birbhum in West Bengal has undoubtedly the largest number of votaries of the serpent-deity Manasa. Any casual visitor to the rural areas of this district will certainly agree with me on this point. Even to this day the serpent-worship in Birbhum is a very well-developed and living cult. Almost in every village in this district a visitor will come across one or more serpent shrines which are but low mud-walled straw-huts situated within the house-quardrangles of some of the lower class Hindus. Daily worship is offered in most of these shrines where invariably a Hinduized aboriginal conducts the worship. People of the various sections of the Hindu community ungrudgingly join the worship though the educated higher class Hindus generally disassociate themselves from it. Such shrines are maintained by a class of priests known as *Deyasi* or *Dyasi*, Sanskritized sometimes to *Devamsi* meaning a part and parcel of the gods though the word is believed to have been derived from *Deva-vasi* meaning associate of god. But I think the word has originated from some non-Aryan source. For in Southern India the word *Deyasi* is still very widely used in rural areas to denote a headman 'who may be said in a manner to corresponde to a 'Justice of Peace'. These priests come, as I have already stated, from the Hinduized aboriginals. But due to the growing influence of Hinduism Brahmin priests are also requisitioned on special occasions. Sometimes the maintenance of the serpent-shrines forms the only source of income of the *Deyasi* who also act as exorcists in snake-bite. It is rather strange that the serpent-worship in the neighbouring districts of Birbhum is neither as wide nor as developed as it is in Birbhum proper. The area of Murshidabad district which is contiguous to Birbhum and falls west of the river Bhagirathi is an exception to this.

The serpent-shrines in the above area are made, as I have already stated, of mud-walls roofed with straw. No provision is however made for the entry of air and light from outside when the only door is closed after the daily worship. Within in the darkness are installed on raised altars the 'images' of the serpent-deity known by various local names at various places, e.g., Chintamani (literally meaning a fabulous gem said to grant the possessor whatever he may wish for), Jalduburi (diver), Visahari (destroyer of poison), Padma-kumari (lotus maiden), Budima (the old mother), Dulaler Ma (Dulal's mother), and various others. A Bagdi, Kaot or Mal, all Hinduized aboriginals is entrusted with the duty of performing the worship which is adopted as a hereditory profession. On the raised altar within the shrine are to be seen three, five or seven earthen pitchers with the carvings of hoods of snakes around and covered with a thick layer of vermilion which is being deposited on them since the day of their installation some decades back. Very rarely, however,

one pitcher is also seen, but in all cases it must be an odd number. On the top of each image are placed in green leaves of the *Cauctus Indica* plant (*Euphorbia lingularum*), which are daily replaced at the time of worship. Sometime brass nails which are offered by the devotees in fulfilment of their mental vows, are stuck to the outer side of the images. These nails are known as *chik* (one which glitters) as they glitter in the dimn light of the lamp which burn within. The images are considered to be mutually related to each other as sisters and they are also differently named. Numerous legends are in vogue with these earthen pitchers which are worshipped as the representatives of the serpent deity.

I have now to give here an account of the serpent-worship as it is prevalent in North Bengal. In North Bengal the serpent-cult is also very widely prevalent. From the archaeological discoveries of Paharpur in Dinajpur district which adjoins Maldah on the east and north-east it is evident that serpent worship was a highly popular cult in this area from as early as the eleventh century A. D. Both anthropomorphic and zoomorphic serpent-images have been discovered from there. In this area there is no permanent serpent-shrine anywhere. The worship is held once in the whole year with great pomp. The orthodox Hindu serpent festival known as Naga-Panchami is unknown here even among the higher caste Hindus. On the last day of the Bengali month of Sravana (July-August) the annual worship is held instead of on the Naga-Panchami day. The worship is held either at the public places of such worships or in the houses of the individual worshippers on that day. No image of the deity is generally made, but on this occasion the earthen images of the eight principal serpents of the Mahabharata legend (or sometimes of one serpent, probably of Astika of the same legend) are worshipped. In most cases instead of any image the *Cauctus Indica* plant is worshipped as the seat of the serpent-deity. Special offerings, consisting of milk and fried rice and sometimes with banana kept in big-sized arum leaves, are offered to the deity. In East Maldah the floors of rooms, verandah and the house-compound are beautifully decorated with special designs of rice-paste drawings resembling the winding gait of the serpent. The womenfolk abstain from taking food on that occasion in some places. In most of the Hindu families no food is cooked on that day. This ceremonial or ritual abstinence of cooking is known as *arandhan* which is observed on some other occasions also.

The Rajvamsi constitute the main population of Rangpur, (East Pakistan) Cooch-Behar and Jalpaiguri districts. Serpent worship is also prevalent among them with due pomp and grandeur. In the Raj family of Jalpaiguri which also belong to the Rajvamsi clan, idols illustrating the principal serpent-legend are displayed on this occasion when a large fair is also held. Sometimes the festival continues for the whole month

during which various folk-entertainments are held.

Barring a few minor exceptions, on the whole, there is unity in the rituals of serpent-worships in the districts along the Ganges. Among them the western part of the district of Murshidabad is naturally influenced by the district of Birbhum. Elsewhere such as in East Burdwan, Hooghly, Howrah, Nadia and 24-Parganas there is very little or no difference in ritualistic observations of serpent-worship. In this part of Bengal there are public places of worship of the serpent-deity in almost every village where worship is held on the prescribed date invariably before a *Cauctus Indica* plant which grows in size as years role by. People assemble there irrespective of caste and creed and offer their worship without, however, any animal sacrifice. Sometimes the higher caste Hindu women, instead of going over to such places of public worship hold the worship at their own houses with the assistance of the Brahmin priests. In that case also a branch of the *Cauctus Indica* plant will be invariably kept upon a conventional type of earthen pitcher which will, however, form the chief object of worship. No image is built nor any animal is sacrificed in this connection. Dasahara (the day on which the river Ganges is ceremonially worshipped), Naga-Panchami (the day on which the serpent is ceremonially worshipped all over India by the orthodox Hindus), the last day of the Bengali month of Ashadha (June-July), of Sravana (July-August), and of Bhadra (August-September) roughly speaking the four months of rains are the occasions when the serpent-deity is worshipped. In some villages small brick-built shrines are also raised permanently at such places of public worship by some dedicated devotee. Permanent images built of metals or stones are also sometimes installed inside the shrines. At Kidderpore near Calcutta, within a shrine there is a big image of the serpent deity made of brass which must have attracted notice of many passersby. Daily worship of the goddess is however held at this place. The following account of the rites of the serpent deity was recorded from a villages known as Uttarbhag in 24-Parganas is worth notice. It has some special features not known to exist in other parts of the State. Writes Dr. S. L. Hora from his personal observations wrote: 'So far as I have been able to ascertain the mode of representing this godling at Uttarbhag by two conical mounds of mud is quite different from all others so far known. Each mound has three clay heads of cobra arranged on one side and a mark of vermilion put in from of them. It seems probable that three mud-mounds are substitutes for water pond or earth pots. It has also to be noted that the *puja* at *Uttarbhag* was performed towards the end of January or early in February and not as usual the months of July and August". The worship of Manasa at Uttarbhag according to the writer, has thus 'to be treated as a relic, without any specific utilitarian back-

ground in its present form'. But from my own experience I have come to learn that the worship of Manasa is held twice during the year - once during the rainy season and again after harvesting in this part of the district.

Serpent-worship is almost like a national festival in East Bengal though it is held only once in a year. Only in a very few places are there permanent shrines of the serpent-goddess.* I know only two such places, one is known as Manasa-Bari (house of Manasa) of Vikrampur in Dacca and the other is known as Jalkumari's Bari (house of Jalkumari) of Sucharkadandi in Chittagong. I have also heard that there are a few such places in the district of Sylhet but I have no personal knowledge of them. Animal sacrifice is an indispensible adjunct to the rituals in East Bengal.

Owing to the wide prevalence of the cult among all classes of people in East Bengal, a very elaborate and complicated ritual has developed in this area with regard to its observance. Though the mode of worship are fundamentally the same, yet they differ in detail to a considerable extent. There is little difference in ritualistic observances of this cult in the area covered by East Mymensing, West Sylhet and North Tippera. This area can be accepted as a social and cultural unit. The annual celebration of the serpent-worship is held here on the last day of the Bengali month of Sravana when whole of the above area is practically covered by a vast sheet of water deposited by overflow from the Assam and Surma Valleys. People irrespective of caste or creed build earthen images of the snake-deity and worship her at their own houses invididually with sacrifices either of goat or of pigeon. The Vaisvavas, (the worshippers of Visnu), who are vegetarian offer the goddess sacrifices of sugar-cane, pumpkin and other vegetables. The image has two or sometime four arms—two clay snakes spread their hoods on either shoulder of her. On the following day, before the image is immersed into the river, the earthen snakes are taken out of the image and kept in the house. People believe that the dried earth of these clay snakes is an infallible remedy of many incurable diseases specially children's diseases. There is one very interesting item among the objects of worship here, which is nowhere met with now-a-days. This is known as *Karandi* which is worshipped along with the image and sometimes in lieu of it. It is made with Indian cork (*shola*) in the shape of a small house, generally not more than two feet in height. Coloured drawings of serpents, the serpent-goddess and some characters and some incidents of the serpent-legend are made on the conical outer roof and

*In Banaripara of Bakherganj district of East Pakistan there is permanent shrine and temple of Goddess Manasa. Ed.

the flat outer walls of it. These drawings are undoubtedly one of the remarkable specimens of folk-art in Bengal. After the animal is sacrificed its blood is sprinkled on the *Karandi* which is sometimes preserved in the house with the stains of blood on it, though more frequently floated down the river on the immersion day. Besides the Karandi there is another essential ingredient necessary for the worship of the serpent deity. It is the tiny pitchers (*ghat*) made of earth and shaped in a peculiar fashion. It is like a thin pipe with two snakes spreading their hoods on either side of it. Sometimes a human face, obviously that of the serpent-deity, is carved out of the upper part of the pipe. These pitchers are known as *Kaitari Ghat*. Though the word *Kaitar* in East Bengal means pigeon, I failed to understand how this particular bird could be associated with an object of serpent worship. These pitchers are filled with corn and kept beside the image during the worship. Milk and banana are kept on some vessels made of plantain bark and are placed in the Karandi as the special offerings to the serpents. Eight kinds of fried things such as pea, oil-seed and other pluses form the special offerings for the eight principle serpents of the Mahabharata legend.

The special feature of the serpent festival in this part of the State is the rice-paste drawing (*alpana*). The entire venue of worship is decorated, with these drawings serpents represent in the various designs. Around this serpent drawing other drawings illustrating the chief incidents of the snake-story are also found. Coloured powders are used in such drawings. The entire floor of the room appears to be a picture-gallery. From the first day of the Bengali month of Sravana until the day of the worship which is held on the last day of the month the principle snake-story is recited in part every day after nightfall before the assembly of the villagers. The immersion ceremony of the deity takes place on the day following her worship. This occasion is marked by a special festival, namely the boat-race. It is very difficult to say how this boat-race has come to be associated with the immersion ceremony of the serpent-deity. I have already stated that this area is covered by a vast sheet of water during the rainy season. These marshy lands are known as *haor*—the word seems to have been derived from the Sanskrit word '*Sagara*' meaning the sea. There are certain public places where the racing boats of the neighbouring villages assemble and hold competition in race, the winning boat ties a new piece of cloth in its prow as a symbol of victory.

The districts of Dacca, Faridpur and Bakherganj of East Pakistan form another distinct social unit. The area known as Vikrampur is included within it which being most effectively influenced by Hinduism in the whole of East Bengal has developed certain rituals in the line more

of Hinduism proper than that of the popular faiths. Serpent-worship is also a very well-developed cult here having its rituals more complicated than in any other part of East and West Bengal.

The Naga-Panchami mentioned above is very widely prevalent here among all classes of Hindus. On this occasion worship of the eight principal serpent of the Mahabharata legend or nine or forty two serpents according to the family tradition of each worshipper, is held. Earthen images of serpents with raised hoods, the number of which is determined according to the tradition prevailing in each family, are made and worshipped on this occasion. Worship in all classes is done by the Brahmin priests without any scruple whatsoever. The serpent-deity is also worshipped on the last day of the Bengali month of Sravana as in other places of East Bengal—the worship of the serpent-deity on this particular day is known as the worship of *Pat* Visahari. In most houses, a pitcher representing the serpent-deity is installed on the first day of the Bengali month of Sravana and worshipped upto the last day of the same month when it is ceremonially immersed. The housewives, young or old, are not allowed to go to their fathers' house on any account after the pitchers have been installed within the house. As there is no dearth of watery stretches in the above area the boat festival is also celebrated here on such and also on other occasions.

Neither Nag-Panchami nor the worship of Pat-Visahari is anything of importance so far as serpent-worship is concerned among the people of the above area. The most important serpent-festival is known here as *Rayani*, a word of doubtful origin.[1] *Rayani* can be celebrated at any time of the year. It is indeed a very important social festival among the Hindus of the above area though it is known elsewhere in Bengal. When a child is born in a family a mental vow is taken by its head to the effect that the snake-festival known as Rayani would be performed on the occasion of its marriage or sacred-thread ceremony if the child is a male and Brahmin or Vaidya by caste. It is indeed a very costly affair. Therefore due to economic reasons a great part of its rituals is now being sacrificed though only a couple of decades back the festival was used to be held two or three days before the actual sacred thread or the marriage ceremony as the case may be. The celebration of Rayani extends over a period either of five or two and a half days according to the custom prevailing in each family or in the absence of that according to the mental vow taken for either of the above periods at the time of the child's birth. In this connection clay images of the serpent-

1. In East Bengal the Sanskrit word 'Yatra' with the double meaning of festival and journey is known as Rayani. The word Rayani may have been derived from that.

goddess as big as the image of the goddess Durga (three to four feet in height) are sometimes built. On either side of the image are placed three or four images of her associates. In front of these images a row of idols representing the chief characters of the principle Bengali serpent-story are placed side by side each on his or her distinct seat. The snake-story is narrated throughout the night. Nobody dares to hold the marriage of his son or daughter without performing this ceremony. Because it is very strongly believed here that on failure to do so snakes will create trouble to the married couple.

The rituals of the serpent-worship in some parts of Bengal have merged into the popular Saivism of those areas. As the serpent is the ornament of Siva according to the Puranic tradition it has been found very convenient to absorb the serpent-cult within Saivism from a considerably early period of time. In many popular Saiva shrines live serpents are found to be preserved. I have myself seen some living snakes in a village shrine of Siva in the district of Burdwan. They live inside holes made on the walls and floor of the shrine and generally live on the milk and other offerings given before the deity at the time of worship. Gradually they increase in number, but nobody coming to the temple is afraid of them nor do these serpents cause any harm to anybody. At the time of the worship these snakes come out of their holes at the smell of the incense and the sound of the bell. After the worship is over they take the food and drink offered by the priest and then quietly retire to their holes. In some places serpents live in the hollow of big *peepul* trees which shade the shrines below. At the time of the annual worship of Siva offerings are also made to them by the devotees. None ever think of causing any harm to them. Snake charmers are also not allowed to catch these snakes which are considered absolutely harmless due to their supposed divine association. In places where the serpent-worship has practically merged into the local Saiva-cult no rites exclusively of the serpent-goddess are found to exist. They have been inseparably connected with the rites of Siva.

In some parts of West Bengal even today a special serpent-festival, secular in character, is observed. This is known as Jhampan which really means a stage erected to exhibit tricks with snakes. It is held on the last day of the Bengali month of Sravana when the annual serpent-worship is held throughout whole of Bengal. Though under the influence of present urban culture it is fast becoming obsolete yet it was a very common thing during the last century. Jhampan is really the annual conference of the snake-charmers or exorcists of a particular area. The exorcists of a particular area or disciples of a particular preceptor in snake-charmer assemble at a place on this occasion and show various tricks and feats with living snakes, claimed to be venomous, as they pro-

ceed with music along the public road. Sometimes the disciples carry the preceptor on their shoulders along the road on a mobile platform on which the latter goes on showing various tricks with live snakes. Sometimes a bullock-cart is also used as the mobile platform for this purpose. The eager crowd on either side of the road, with a mixed feeling of horror and delight, witness the performance. The chief among their dexerities is to show how they remove the poisonous fangs of the serpents. Sometime the exorcists coil the snakes around their necks and arms. Fatal cases of snake-bite among the participants sometime occur in the courses of their display of the feats which is sometimes made with snakes with their poison-fangs unextracted in the exuberance of zeal. I have been told that due to fatal consequence the practice had been long abandoned in many places with the least prospect of future revival. The practice is confined among the *Kayat* or *Kaivarta* (fisherman class) in particular though as a rule every exorcist, to whatever caste he may belong, is allowed to participate in it.

A very rich folk-literature flourished in Bengal on the local legends of the serpent-goddess Manasa as early as probably the thirteenth century A. D. One of such legends in particular written in the form of narrative poetry, gained the widest popularity of all the classes of folk-literature in Bengal though not only this State but also the neighbouring States of Assam and Bihar. Hundreds of poets composed verses with the same theme which is being carried from generation to generation for centuries even to this day. This is known as the legend for the merchant Chand and Behula. It is not however the only story extant in Bengal that sings the glory of the serpent-deity Manasa. There is yet another which is recited in the course of the ceremonial worship of the deity held by the Bengali women during the months of rain. Besides the above there are innumerable snake-stories of secular character in the folk-literature of Bengal.

The principal Bengali snake-story or the narrative of Chand Sadagar in its various forms has been contributing to Bengali folk-amusement of secular nature also from very ancient times. These are the four principal forms in which the narrative has been adopted for folk-amusement, viz., *Bhasan Yatra* or a popular form of drama, *Rayani* or a form of musical recitation of the narrative and *Patul Natch* or puppet dance. In addition of these principal forms there are a few others of minor importance. All the above forms are still prevalent in different parts of Bengal.

From the wide distribution of the serpent-cult in Bengal it is only natural to expect that this reptile should enter deep into the belief and superstition of the people of the States of West Bengal and East Pakistan.

University of Calcutta, Calcutta.

NOTES AND NEWS

5th Congress of the International Society for Folk narrative under the auspices of the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore will be held at Bucharest from August 26 to 31, 1969. In this Congress world famous folklorists and ethnographers are expected to participate.

* * * *

Under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India and Indian Publishers Association an International Seminar on book publishing and selling was held at New Delhi from March 11-15, 1969. Mr. S. N. Kanjilal, Supdt. of the Calcutta Univ. Press & Publication attended the seminar as a delegate of the University. The Director of the Yulu Univ. Press, Manager of Oxford Univ. Press and many others participated in the seminar. In his speech Mr. Kanjilal suggested that an Association of Indian University Press and Publications should be formed. This organisation may look to the production of books, preparation of catalogues and other sales promotion materials which may be done in commercial way. Mr. Kanjilal's suggestion for establishing an Association of the Indian University Press and Publications was highly appreciated.

* * * *

One the Holy festival day, the 3rd March, 1969 there was another human sacrifice in Rajasthan (the first was in Udaipur) in the village Akoria in the Tonk district. The village is located 30 miles away from the district Head Quarter. In the village there are 50 households. More than 90% are agriculturists. The rest 10% consists of blacksmiths, leather workers and day labourers. Even today there has been no spread of education. There is a primary school up to class III. In it's students role there are 15 students. Goddess Chamunda is the village deity. People from neighbouring villages also come and perform worship to this deity. In order to get hidden-leasure a 54 years old blackmith, Bajrang Khatu by name, was killed some greedy villagers before the goddess, but the killers could procure no hidden money except passing their days in jail custody. When the police came to the spot for further investigation, it was reported that they were haunted by the snakes. Thus being frightened the police began to worship the serpent Goddess Manasa.

BOOK-REVIEW

FOLKLORE MUSEUM, By Dr. Shyamchand Mukherjee, M.A., D.Phil, Supdt. of Archaeology, Govt. of West Bengal, Published by Indian Publications, Calcutta-1. January, 1969. Foreword by Smt. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya & Introduction by Sankar Sen Gupta, pp. I-XXXII, + 1-56, price Rs. 10.50.

The book under review can be described as a collection of various theoretical ideas on folklore studies as well as on folklore museum, e.g. on p. IX the author says, "the science of folklore is a historical science in asmuchas it throws an welcome light on the past history of the mankind by inductive scientific method". But unfortunately he has not given at least one analytical case study to illustrate this. By reading this book one may conclude that Dr. Mukherjee has read many books on the subject but none critically and like a socalled good student he has consumed many good ideas to be found in those books and has quoted them verbatim.

The same uncritical approach has characterised the introduction by Shri Sankhar Sen Gupta who says at p XV, "All developing countries after achieving their political independence have formulated plans for betterment of their people". But is it true of say Indonesia, Congo, Ghana or Negeria. Have the Plans which are supposed to have been put to effect in India, bettered the life of the common people ? Our writters have done enough theorizing, time has come to do a little practical work. Shri Sen Gupta again goes on the same page, "One of the most intriguing problems ever to agitate the mind of man has been the quest for an adequate explanation of the amazing socio-cultural efflorescence that occured in ancient India". I don't know why there is a problem on this point and why pick out India alone. What about ancient Egypt, Greece, China or even Mexico ? What is the use of writing this type of statements ?

In the main part of the book Dr. Mukherjee has given a compilation of all types of theories on what is meant by folklore as can evidence by a catalogue of different writers on the subject (pp. 14-18). The book's only utility is that in this publication Dr. Mukherjee has gathered together all useful information on folklorology, museum and other allied subjects in a concise form for the reference purpose of research scholars and there ends the matter. The printing and get-up of the book is good and the price Rs. 10.50 is also moderate.

J. K. Guha, M.A.

Govt. of West Bengal, Calcutta.

EDITORIAL

India's one of the main effort continues to go in keeping the country's education in a state of dynamic development, to keep its people, "a people learning". The growth of overall education of the present type began in 1948. An uphill battle is being fought to provide education through mother-tongue. Today with a population of about fifty million, more than 36 per cent population of India are literates. Here millions are engaged in higher and advanced studies in humanities and sciences. Even the peasants and workers are being encouraged through different agencies to arrange hours of study to increase their knowhow. Special frameworks is being developed to deal with India's heterogeneons population, new methods are being introduced in nurseries and kindergartens, educational and vocational counselling is on the way, correspondence course and different institutes have started for the teaching of Hindi and other regional languages for the use of audio-visual aids as well as helping culturally deprived childrens and persons. Here childrens are dominating factor in education. There are 39% students in kindergartens, 36% in primary schools, 32% in postprimary schools. Research and experimentations are being acclerated to close educational gap. Vocational training is is being vigorously promoted which have provided new openings for the youths. There has also also been efforts of direct connection between the standared of knowledge of the parents and the educational progress of their children. The campaign against illiteracy is directed to give everyone a basic education and to know the country and her people from a unbiased and open mind.

From primary schools more than 60% go on high schools which are not free in India. The primary education is free in some States while it is very costly for the majority States of India. From high schools more than 36% go to colleges and from colleges more than 20% go to the universities. All through their careers Indian students study literature, art, culture, science, technology, history, geography, social study, music, dance, drama, and others. But time has come when from primary level the students of humanity and socio-biological groups of science should know their traditional past, their folklore. Folklore offers such knowledge that are not available in written literature. Let our educators take lead to that effect and formulate syllabus discipline. In doing so they will be doing a valuable service not only to the folklore movement but also to the country at large.

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FOLKLORE

May, 1969.

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DR. ZAKIR HUSAIN

A stunned and grief-stricken nation, stands still to pay its respectful homage to the memory of its revered leader, the late Dr. Zakir Husain, who was its "friend, philosopher and guide'. He was a great statesman, educationist and scholar of a high order. He was the embodiment of humanism, universal love and brotherhood. He held many high offices in public-life with distinction. He is deeply mourned not only by his countrymen but also by the people of various other countries Condolence messages have come to the acting president from all over the word. Loved by all in the country he has rightly been called *Ajatshatru* which means, a person who has no enemy. Besides, he was an enthusiastic supporter of folklore movement and had ecouraged the editor of this journal with several letters and goodwishes for years together. He came in our contact as an educator and since 1958 when he was the Governor of Bihar he had encouraged us in our activities till he breadth his last.

The late President, Dr. Zakir Husain was born in Hyderabad on 8th February 1897. He lost his father when he was only nine. He started his education in a residential school and later went to Aligarh University where he met Mahatma Gandhi for the first time when the latter visited the place with the Ali brothers. He had barely finished his college education when the first wave of the non-cooperation movement swept across the country. But he chose the less exciting but equally important field of national service—education. He helped in the establishment of an institution which has earned a country-wide reputation—the Jamia Millia Islamia. He served this university as Vice-chancellor for about 22 years during which he built up the Jamia Millia into a distinguished centre of learning.

Dr. Husain secured a Ph. D. in economics from the University of Berlin. During his educational career he wrote articles on Mahatma Gandhi and delivered lectures in Scandinavian countries. In 1937, when India attained a measure of provincial autonomy and Gandhiji urged the new popular governments to adopt his scheme of work-

orinted 'basic education' he invited Dr. Zakir Husain to preside over the National Committee on Basic Education. Later Dr. Husain took up the Vice-chancellorship of Aligarh Muslim University at a very critical time when Aligarh had been a storm centre of seperatist politics. Here he served for a period of eight years till 1956 and set everything right.

Political Life

Left to himself, Dr. Zakir Husain might never have entered political life. He was drafted into political life in 1952, at the age of 55 when he was nominated a member of Rajya Sabha as one who had distinguished himself in the field of literature, art and social service.

He was appointed Governor of Bihar State in 1957. Later, in 1952 when Dr. S. Radhakrishnan was elected President, Dr. Husain was chosen as the most suitable succeessor as Vice-President by late Shri Jawaharlal Nehru. Dr. Zakir Husain, in the capacity of Vice-President won the respect and affection of all the sections of the Upper House.

He was honoured with 'Padma Vibhushan' in 1954 and was awarded the 'Bharat Ratna' in 1963 in recognition of his public service of the highest order.

In May 1967 Dr. Zakir Husain was elected as President of India. In a short speech after his swearing in as President he declared : "The whole of *BHARAT* is my family. It shall be my earnest endeavour to seek to make this home strong and beautiful, a worthy home for a great people engaged in the fascinating tasks of building a just and prosperous and graceful life." This was not a mere speech. Dr. Husain worked hard to keep his family of the whole Bharat united till the last.

A Writer

Dr. Zakir Hussian was also a powerful writer of Urdu prose. His best known published work is an Urdu translation of Plato's *REPUBLIC*. He wrote several books for children. His favourite authors were Plato, Goethe and Marx whom he often quoted in his speeches, academic contributions and private conversations.

Even after assuming political offices Dr. Husain served the cause of education and culture in India and abroad in many capacities. Let him rest in peace in heaven.

P. THANKAPPAN NAIR

MALAYALAM WOMEN : THEIR PAST AND PRESENT

In this article the contributor have treated Nair women. This can also be applicable to womenfolk of other communities of the State where a little bit of addition and alteration may be necessary.

Introduction :

NAIR women of Kerala, who had hitherto represented the typical Dravidian womanhood, have considerably changed with the dawn of the 20th century. They now vie with their male counterparts for jobs and social honours. They occupy exalted positions. An attempt is made here to depict their life on the basis of proverbs, social and ritual observances and folk-traditions.

Matriarchy among Nairs received a setback when the report of the Malabar Marriage Commission was published. The institution of monogamy and changes in the law of the *Marumakkathayam* system of inheritance brought about 12 years ago by legislation have dealt a fatal blow to matriarchy. Though Nairs still reckon their lineage from the *Tharvad* (extended family), nuclear family is the rule and joint family an exception. The converse was the case till the beginning of the present century.

Women enjoyed an enviable position among Nairs. All the family property was vested in them and they only could hold and inherit it. No male member of the *Tharvad* was permitted to hold, inherit and dispose of property, though acquisition was largely their duty. The traditional calling of Nairs being fighting, they played a significant role in the history of Kerala when the European nations vied with each other in building empires. The advent of European nations was responsible for the evolution of the money economy which in turn changed the age-old matriarchal system. The men were not required to marry, procreate children, bring them up and maintain the family. It was the exclusive duty of the women-folk. Men formed connections with ladies, the duration of which depended upon the whims of women. This is responsible for the *Marumakkathayam* law of inheritance, the genesis of which is expressed beautifully by Bishop

Friar Jordanus 650 years ago. The Frair who visited India and stayed in Kerala in between 1323-1330 A.D. in his "Mirabilica Descripta" (The Wonders of the East) says: "In this India (—India the Greater—i.e. Malabar) never do (even) the legitimate sons of great kings, or princes, or barons inherit the goods of their parents, but only the sons of their sisters; for they say that they have no surety that those are their own sons, because wives and mistresses may conceive and generate by someone else, but it is not so with the sister, for what ever man may be the father they are certain that the offspring is from the womb of their rister and is consequently thus truely of their blood".[1]

Nair women exercised great influence in the social and domestic life of Kerala. No restraints were imposed on their sexual or social life and every Nair introduced himself as the son of 'so and so' lady of 'so and so' *Tharvad*. The saying 'Nairkkum Nayakkum Achchanilla' (i.e. Nairs and dogs do not know who their father is:) is typical of the polyandrous social system that existed among this highly cultured community of India.

With these introductory words, we shall assess the social life of women among Nairs as reflected in Malayalam sayings. We confine ourselves to treat mother, wife, in-laws, marriage and women in general.

I. LIFE IN PROVERBS

Mother:

The position of the mother among Nairs is very high though matriarchy and *Marumakkathayam* are things of the past. In every Nair family it is the 'Ammavilayattam' (omniscience of the mother). She occupies a dignified and honourable position. She governs the whole house. The remark of Rev. Samuel Mateer, made a hundred years ago, that "In the families of the Nayars she governs the whole house, often a large one consisting of from twenty to thirty persons, provides for the wants of each, settles all disputes, and rules even her grown-up sons, who never in public sit down in her presence, but stand humbly behind her chair"[2] still holds good.

Uterine Mother: Polyandry among Nair women did not dishonour or lower them in esteem. Though children belonged to several husbands, their love and affection towards their mother was unequivocal. They say: 'Paththamma chamanjalum pettammayakilla" (even if ten mothers may make up themselves, they can't become the mother who gave birth) and 'Mattamma chamanjal pettammayaka' (a second

mother cannot equal a mother who gives birth). The mother's curse is irredeemable ('Mathrusapam thadukkavathorikkalum').

Affection : The disinterested affection of the mother to her children is beyond any description. The truth of the saying 'Ammayolam sthayi makkalkkuntenkil perattile vellam melpoatte' (if children can reciprocate the love of their uterine mother the current of the river takes a reverse course) is universally acknowledged. The children can never pay off their debt to their mother. They are rather ungrateful. The proverb 'Pettammakku thavititikkukayilla, aarante ammakku irimpitikkum' (Children do not polish rice for their own mother, but will hammer red-hot iron for others) illustrates this point.

Jewellophobia : Mothers become laughing stock even of children, if they take to non-traditional jewellery. A lady should wear only ornaments of her status and financial position. If they put on fineries, people ridicule them by saying "Ottumillathatha ammakku arakkapanathinte thali' (A penurious mother wears a precious marriage badge).

Morality : It is the duty of the mother to arrange for the marriage of her daughters when they come of age. Mother is the source of guidance and inspiration to children, especially daughters, in a Nair *Tharvad.* The existence of polyandry, i.e. temporary marriage of one particular husband for a particular period, did not stand in the way of her being the moral custodian of the family. No indiscriminate entertainment of suitors was possible to a Nair lady without the sanction of the *Karanavan* (senior male member) of the *Tharvad.* If a mother led an immoral life, the daughter cannot but be grossly immoral. The saying, 'Amma pulayatichiyenkil makalum pulayatichi' illustrates this truth. The irreverent attitude of a daughter towards her mother at times is reflected in the maxim, 'Ammakku prasavavedana, makalukku veenavayana' (While the mother is in labour pains, the daughter is fiddling).

Old age : The maintenance of a lady in her old age was the duty of the *Tharvad.* Her fortune did not depend upon the whims and fancies of her husband or children. But, if the *Tharvad* had become indigent, children were required to look after her well. If they do not discharge their duty in this respect, people often say : 'Pettammkku chilavinum kodukkayilla, sandhyakku villakkum vakkukayilla" (The mother will not be maintained and the house will not be lighted at the dusk) and ask 'Pettammakku choaru kotuththo, moothathammakku arialappan' (Has the mother been fed to measure rice for the grandmother ?). The mother comes first in the supply of her wants. The proverbs—'Pettammakku illatthatho poattiya mutthachikku' (Is the mother to be denied for an ayah ?). 'Mulako-

tuththa ammayekkal valutho muttham kotuttha amma' (Is the lady who kissed the baby greater than the mother who breast-fed it) illustrate the universal fact that there is no female above the mother for being looked after better.

Partiality : The children brought up by mothers are often spoiled on account of their excessive affection as they spare the rod. This truth is illustrated in the saying, 'Amma poattiya makkalum umma poattiya koazhiyum atangukayilla' (The children brought up by the mother are as uncontrollable as the chicken fed by a Muslim lady). The children are babies to a mother even after their attainment of maturity ('Makkal ethra Valuthayamlum ammakku kutti') and in-laws are in-laws to her. Her partiality to her own children is brought out by the saying, 'Makkalkku matiyil chavittam, marumakkalkku thotiyil chavittikkoota' (Her own children can thumb her on the lap, but in-laws are not permitted to touch the tip of her cloth), 'Makan marichchalum ventilla, marumakalute dukham kantal mathi' (The bereavement of the daughter-in-law is better than the death of the son). She may even beat her own daughter to scare away her daughter-in-law ('Marumakale petippikkuvan makale atikkuka).

Children are enjoined not to initiate a work unless they get the blessing of their mother ('Amma moolam aravakkuka'—build a granary after taking advice from the mother). The sayings 'Ammayum makalum pennu thanne' (Mother and daughter are females) and 'Ammayum makalum orupoale' (Mother and daughter are alike) point out that they are birds of the same feather.

Guide : Tenacity is required to achieve the desired goal. If anyone fritters his energy by doing two diametrically opposite things people often ask, 'Ammayute matiyil irikkukayum venam, acchante koote natakkukayum venam' (Is it possible to sit on the lap of the mother and at the same time walk with the father?) and one who fails in his ventures by fissiparous tendencies consoles himself, 'Athumilla ithumilla ammayute deekshayumilla' (There is nothing, not even the beard of the mother).

Martial Spirit : Being a martial race, Nairs were reputed masters of fencing (*Kalari payattu*). Boys are advised not to show their temper towards their mothers, but instead they should show their valour in the fencing arena. This is what is implied in the saying, 'Ammayotullathu arangathekku'. Boys are advised to master the art of fencing before taking to the field and not complain about their failures to their mothers (Angatiyil thoattal ammayoatoa?).

Conjugal Life : The conjugal life of a lady was sacred and nobody was ever permitted have a say in it even if it be the *karanavan* of the

household. It is the business of the husband to avenage any insult done to his wife, as it is the duty of the brother-in-law in the case of the sister ('Ammaye thachchal achchan choadikkanam, pengale thachchal aliyan choadikkanam).

We cannot expect one to show the same amount of respect one shows to his own mother towards the mother of someone else. In fact a lady who goes mad becomes the laughing stock of others. This is illustrated in the saying, 'Aarante Ammakku bhrantu pitichchal kanunnorkku orimpam' (Spectators enjoy the insanity of other peoples' mothers).

Fidelity : If a married Nair lady's fidelity is doubted, she was liable to be discarded. As has already been stated earlier, though polyandrous the marriage was, a Nair lady was never permitted to entertain more than one husband for a particular period of time. This temporary marriage, *Sambandham,* required the sanction of the *Karanavan* and the approbation of the villagers. The formation of any such *Sambandham* required the presentation of a bridal cloth in the presence of the village elders as witnesses. The husband visited his wife at night only. The severance of the *Sambandham* required the sanction of the *Karanavan* who must be convinced that the lady was not satisfied by her husband. The saying that 'Naalupar paranjal ammaye kalayanam' (The mother should be given up if four people say that she is guilty—of adultery) means that a lady should be given up for immoral conduct.

Death : A Nair did not know who his father was, and as such the mother was everything to him. The death of his mother was the greatest bereavement to him. His sorrow at the death of his mother was greater than the speed of an elephant running amok ('Amma marichhennu paranjal aanaye etuthatakkuvan parayuka). He is advised to be careful in removing the banana skins in the court-yard (if any) even if his mother is dead, as it will endanger the life of others by slipping on them ('Amma chaththu kitannalum vazhakka-thoalu varikalanjittu karayanam').

Wife :

Wife comes next in importance to mother. The status of a wife among Nairs was far from satisfactory. Though a Nair lady in theory was permitted to discard any number of suitors, her choice was limited to one suitor at a given period of time, whereas a gentleman was not required to disclose the number of liaisons he had formed with ladies. A Nair could form *Sambandhams* from Rameswaram to Neeleswarm

if he had the virility, social standing and marital spirit. A lady is advised to be content with her husband and not to run after another, even if he be the king. If she gives up her husband to entertain the king, she loses both ('Arachane kothichchu purushane vetinjavalkku arachanumilla purushanumilla').

A lady gets a befitting husband. This is illustrated in the sayings, 'Chakkikkottha Chankaran', 'Unthiyakattunna achchikku nirangiyatukkunna Nair' (For a pushing wife, a crawling husband), and 'Ittinirakkunna achchikke nirangi unnunna Nair' (For a wife who draws dining table, a gluttonous husband).

One man's food is another man's poison and conjugal quarrels result from the choice of food. The expression, 'Achchikku konchu paksham, Nairkku inchi paksham' (The wife likes shrimps, but the husband likes ginger). The conjugal life is torpeded by the distrust of the partners. A husband finds everything in disorder if he distrusts his wife ('Ishtamillaththa achchi thottathellam kuttam').

A newly-wed wife and a new broomstick is alike. The initial enthusiasm of the couple dies away. This is the meaning of the expression, 'Puththanacchi purappuroam thookkum, pinne untetam atikkukayilla' (A new bride at first sweeps the housetop, but, later on, she will not clean the dining table).

If anything serves a double purpose, people say, (Achchikku utukkanum Nairkku puthakkanum kollam') (The cloth is suitable for the wife to wear and wrap the husband).

A man can have no complaints about a bride whom he did not get ('Kittaththa achchikku kuttamilla). An avaricious wife is greedy even if she gets a field full of gold.

The position of Nair wives is not clear from proverbs, due to the peculiar social conditions that obtained in the community.

Cousins :

Cross-cousins were preferred in marriage among the Nairs till recently. Maternal and paternal cross-cousins today hesitate to marry, though it is still perfectly legal. There was no permission required to marry one's cousins. 'Ammavante makale kalyanam kazhikkanum pachchachoattil thai vakkanum arotum choadikkenta' (No one need be asked permission for marrying one's maternal uncle's daughter and for planting seedlings in the shade of trees). It was not improper to make overtures towards the daughter of maternal uncles and paternal aunts daughters.

In-laws :

There are few proverbs in Malayalam to depict the life and status of mother-in-law and maternal and paternal aunts. They did not play any significant role in the *Tharavad.* A Nair seldom came in contact with his mother-in-law as there was no matrilocal residence. The mother-in-law was held in decision and her affection towards her son-in-law was not real. People pooh-pooh her pudding ('Ammayi ammete pachhore !), but the paternal or maternal aunt's offer of this delicacy was accepted ('Ammayiyum kutichchu palkanji, nhanum kutichchu palkanji'). Daughter-in-law should be tactful and clever. She should surpass her mother-in-law in tact. This is expressed in the saying, 'Irunnorungunna ammayi ammakku kitannorukkunna marumakal' (A lying daughter-in-law for a sitting mother-in-law).

Marriage :

Nairs disliked marriage as the union of spouses entailed responsibilities. The sayings, 'Pennu kettiyal kalu ketti' (A married man is chained), 'Pennu kettiyal kannum pootti' (Marriage is equivalent to losing eye-sight).

'Pennu kettiyal kannuketti ; kochchuntayal vayum pootti' (Marriage is equivalent to losing eye-sight ; birth of a baby is equivalent to losing the power of speech) illustrate the reasons why a Nair liked to have only *Sambudhams* and not marriage.

Selection : The selection of the bride in marriage is to be done very carefully. The status of the *Tharvad* is to be borne in mind. The sayings, 'Goathramarinju pennum paathramarinju bhikshayum' (check the lineage of the family before giving a girl in marriage and observe the bowl before you give alms) and 'Kuti arinje pennayakkavu' illustrate the point. The checking of the antecedents of the bridegroom and the suitability of a tree is to be ascertained ('Aal noakki pennu, maram noakki koti'). A bridegroom's *Karanavan* should enquire into the family history of his prospective relation. First and foremost is the verification of the moral credentials of the mother-in-law before selecting the daughter ('Thallaye noakkiyittu venam pillaye vangan').

Besides the checking of the antecedents of the mother-in-law, the background of the bride-elect is ascertained, for 'Mannum pennum kante kollavu' (Purchase of land and betrothal of a lady should be done only after ascertaining true facts), and 'Korikkanta vaariyaka ; doore kanta naariyaka' (A lady who is at a distance is as good as the sea, the depth of which has not been measured). Beware,a beautiful girl is

seldom useful for work ('oamanapennu panikaka').

Difficulties : The difficulties on the way of finding out a suitable bride are numerous and the bridegroom should be prepared to use all his wits ('Pennu kettanamenkil perinkalum pitikkanam'). Sometimes it so happens that when a suitable bride is found out, her *Tharvad* is not good and when a good *Tharvad* is selected, it cannot supply a suitable girl ('Pennu cherunpoal veetu cherukayilla ; veetu cherumpoal pennu cherukayilla'). But this does not mean that one should marry his own sister for want of a bride ('Pennillennu vicharichchu pengale kettaruntoa ?).

A member of a prosperous *Tharvad* could get a beautiful bride ('Pana mullachchanu niramulla pennu'). A girl who is not married in time loses her market, but no such social stigma is labelled on a man, for the saying in this respect is 'Pennu moththal mannu ; aanu moththal ponnu' (an aged lady goes to the grave whereas a man who advances in age is gold). A *Tharvad* which is poor should be avoided in *Sambandham* ('Ariyum thiriyum kontu poakentiyidathu sambandham cheyyaruthu'—Marry not where you are required to take rice and light).

Secrets of Sex : A man who has learnt the secrets of sex is like a discerning epicurean ('Unturuchi kantavanum pennuruchi kantavanum vitukayilla'). Nymphomania is not reflected in proverbs, though polyandry is supposed to have orginated by the 'eat and drink and be merry' attitude of Nair ladies.

The bride should be suitable from all points of view, i.e., beauty, family position, relations etc. 'Mannachchikku Mara Nair' (For a dirty bride, a muddy husband), 'Chappachchikku chavaru Nair' (For a sweeper bride, a Chimney sweep husband), 'Cheenkannanu koankanni' For a winking girl a squint eyed) are some of the expressions used to describe the suitability of brides and grooms.

Women in general :

Order of Birth : Girls are the subject matter of a variety of proverbs. The birth of girls in a Nair *Tharvad* was of considerable significance. Though we have not ascertained the merits and demerits of birth of girls in a certain order, it has a bearing on the family's fortunes. The birth of a girl as the third issue, after two boys, is considered to be portent of a fortune, as she will reign like a queen ('Moonamaththe pennu muti vechchu vaazhum'). On the other hand, the fourth issue be a daughter, she will cause ruin to the *Tharvad* ('Naalamaththe pennu natakkallum polikkum'—the fourth daughter will dig up the foundation stone). Though it is said that the eighth be daughter, she

will cause ruin to the places she surveys ('Ettamaththe Pennu etthinoakkunnitam mutiyam') the birth of a girl in the nineth position is believed to bring prosperity to the family ('Onpathamaththe pennu ponpanam vaarum'—the nineth daughter will amass gold). The most auspicious asterism for the birth of a girl is Makam (Magham—10th lunar asterism) as the saying goes : 'Makam piranna manka'.

Querrlousness : Family life is spoiled if there is presence of more than one lady. Ladies will have difference of opinion over petty matters and this leads to quarrel. The presence of two ladies in a house is like the presence of two lions in a den ('Oru veettil rentu naariyum oru koottil rentu nariyum oru poale'). Though four persons can come to a conclusion about any controversial subject, two ladies will not agree on any trival topic. ('Naalu thala cherum, Naalu mula cherukayilla—four heads will agree, not four nipples). The presence of three ladies will keep the courtyard unswept ('Monnu pennulla veettil muttam atikkukayilla") as they will be arguing over their duties. The petty jealousies and idiosynchrasies among ladies find expression in the saying, 'Oruththikku thalu karikku uppillanjittu ; oruththikku thalikku muttillanjittu' (A lady complains about the lack of salt in her taro curry, another complains about missing of her diamond on the marriage badge).

No Pugnacity : Women are not good combatants in a battle. People often say : 'Penpata patayalla, manchira chirayalla' (A bevy of ladies does not form a battalion as an earthen dam cannot make a reservoir) as they have little intellectual and tactical skill ('Pen buddhi pin buddhi'—Ladies' brain works slowly). At the same time, the fury of a lady cannot be controlled by the Creator himself ('Pennorungiyal Brahmanum thatuththu koota) as there are ladies who cannot be controlled by men and posts of house ('Aaninum thooninum atangaththaval').

No Advice : As ladies are inferior in intellect their advice is seldom solicited. One who follows the advice of ladies finds himself in a quandary ('Pen chollu kettal peruvazhyil') as it is believed that a former ruler of Kerala lost his kingdom by listening to the advice of his mistress ('Pen chollu ketta Perumale poale').

Agricultural Operations : Women are forbidden from ploughing the paddy fields. However, it is their privilege to harvest the crops. Minor agricultural operations such as weeding and manuring the field, irrigating the field by indigenous methods etc. are not prohibited. Transplantation of the seedlings of paddy is to be done by women only. Women are not equal to men in physical prowess and hence people say : 'Pennu murichchal mannu muriyumoa ? (Can a lady make a cleavage in

the land ?). Land and ladies improve only to the extent we make improvements upon them ('Pennum mannum nannakkunnitaththoalam nannakum').

Travel : Though Nair women are equal in education to their male counterparts today in Kerala, a travelled lady was disliked in former times, as her home or rather the village was her decreed haunt. A travelled woman is like a garden trespassed by cattle. At the same time there is a saying. 'Penninte bhagyam peruvazhiyil' which means that the fortune of a lady is made in the public road.

Prostitution : Prostitution did not find favour with Nairs on account of polyandry. Prostitutes, therefore, find seldom place in proverbs. There is no physician who becomes weary of travel and there is no prostitute who courts favours sitting at home ('Natannuketta vaidyanum irunnu vetta vasyayum illa').

Troublous : Women have been the cause of troubles between nations, men, and husbands. Gold and girls are at the root of every trouble in the world ('Kanakam moolam kamini moolam kalaham palavidham ulakil sulabham') say people.

Trust Property : Children are to be held in trust. A girl after her marriage becomes the property of her husband. There is no difference between a man who plants plantains to get its bunch and one who brings up a girl ('Nentra vazha nattu kulappikkunnathum pennine kontuvannu pularthunnathum oru poale').

Humility : Ladies are advised to have humility, respect for elders and love their juniors. A lady is an ornament to a *Tharvad* and it is her duty to uphold its good name. A household where a lady indulges in coquetry and a compound where a citrus grows are bound to perish ('Naari natichchetavum naarakam vechchetavum mutiyum). They should have a dignified bearing, neither should they cry nor laugh aloud, but should only pout their lips sweetly to win a world or lose one his faith in the world. Nairs warn themselves and others too thus : 'Chumma karayum penninoyum chumma chirikkum aanineyum visvasikkaruthu' (Believe not ladies who are lachrymose and lads who laugh without reason).

Jealousy : The relationship between sisters and their in-laws or children of two sisters of full blood and other females of the *Tharvad* was never cordial. The jealousy between sisters and their in-laws is universal. This trait has found expression in the saying, 'Kunjangalaye konnalum ventilla, naaththunte thali azhippichal mathi' (No matter the brother is murdered, the marriage badge of the sister-in-law should be untied). The children of the sisters, not to speak of cousins, never considered themselves next of kin. Their relation is transitory like

water poured on a taro-leaf, a drop of which is not retained by it ('Chhettathi anujathi makkalum chenpilapuraththe vellavum samam'). The same is the case with the children of maternal aunts and paternal aunts ('Chittamma makkalum chettayil palliyum thenil kuzhachchalum kachche irikku'—The children of maternal aunts and lizards will have bitter tastes even if they are wrapped in honey).

Labour-pains : A man should acquire expertise by constant practice rather than theorising on a particular topic. A woman who has never given birth does not know the pangs of labour pains ('Machchi ariyumo eattunnovu') and a woman who gives birth to a baby knows how the baby comes out of the womb ('Pettavalkkariyam pillavariththam').

Nobody should poke his nose where he has no business. Mind your own business. What is the use of envying a woman who eats well by one who has not given birth ('Pettaval unnunnathu kantu machchi kothichchittentha' ?)

A lady is a mother first and last and it is her duty to perpetuate the species. Consequently, no lady can't be heard to say that she is weary of childbirth and the muck and muddle of bringing up children. The saying in this respect is : 'Pichchayetthu kettavanum pillapettu kettavalum illa' ('There is no begger who becomes weary of begging and there is no lady who becomes weary of accouchement).

People are want to find out scapegoats for their faults. This human trait is illustrated by the saying 'Pettichchi aakanjittu kutti pennayi' (Through the incapacity of the midwife the infant is a female).

Children : Women are told that children are born by the blessing of God. Like Trust property, they revert to this Trusty. No one should feel proud of having many children as they are liable to die. A lady should bear in mind that 'Pettathellam makkalum netiyathellam dhanavumlla' (whatever is earned is not wealth and the issues of all the birth are not babies). People often ask : 'Pettathellam makkalo ; poothathellam mangayoa ?' (The efflorescence of the mango tree is not mango—as they are destroyed by cloudy weather in which case no fertilisation takes place and the issues of birth are not babies) and mothers are advised not to be unduly optimistic of their children ('Makkale kantum manpoo kantum bhramikkenta').

The social life reflected in proverbs and folksayings of a language cannot be taken to be the barometer of the day as a language takes its own time to crystallise them. The life of Nair ladies is entirely different from what is reflected in the sayings we have explained above. The present-day Nair society has progressed at a supersonic speed. Polyandry is a closed chapter in the social history of Nairs. The advent

of a money-economy on account of service, business, trade and commerce, opened up a new vista in the social fabric of Nairs.

The *Tharvad* system which sustained the twin mechanisms of matriarchy and polyandry disintegrated when Nairs began to go out of Kerala and take up service. During the last one hundred years, the progress of disintegration of these two most important social institutions has been accelerated due to the opening up of the country by railways and other amenities of communication. Matrilocal residence of the wife is considered dishonourable today. The dowry system which was unheard among the Nairs 25 years ago is slowly gaining ground. Among the Nairs of Malabar, dowry is today 'a must'. A share in the family property is also given when a girl is married. Nair ladies who live in the towns and cities of Kerala and outside the State are second to none in sophistication. There are Nair ladies who spend the late evenings in Calcutta's and Bombay's most fashionable night clubs. Society girls are soaring high. There are a number of Nair working girls in the important cities of India.

II. RITUAL LIFE OF NAIR WOMEN

Ladies were excluded from the ritual life of Nairs. No lady was permitted to act as a priest of the community. The religion of Nairs was, and still is, a fusion of animism and shamanism. The Hinduisation of the community took centuries. The vestiges of the old creed are still embedded in the religious practices of Nairs. Still ladies were not given a hand in it. The worship of weapons, seasons, natural objects and ancestors are still the order of the day among Nairs.

The traditional calling of Nairs being fighting the cultivation of land was in the hands of the aggrestic serfs—Pulayas. The immigration of Eravas and Muslims and conversion of the native population into the Christian fold centuries ago helped Nairs to devote their energies to the practice of weapons. The landed property of Nairs being in the hands of other communities, the ladies had no need to take part in the agricultural operations. In fact they were required to enter into *Sambandhams* only. The traditional education of Nair ladies consisted of learning the correct steps for their favourite dance, Thiruvathira.

The most important ritual of the ladies was the *Talikettu Kalyanam*. This ceremony consisted of tying of a *tali* (the heart-shaped marriage badge) around the neck of a girl who had attained puberty. A member of the Thirumulppadu caste (a degraded Brahman) usually tied the *tali*, or in his absence, a Nair boy. The Tali-tier may be a complete stranger and he acquired no marital right over the girl. The man who tied the

tali got a fee and a sumptuous meal. The aim of the *Talikettu Kalyanam* was to proclaim that the girl had come of age and suitors may approach her for forming *Sambandhams*. The institution of monogamy and the disintegration of the *Sambandham* system has not dispensed with the *tali*-tying even today. The tying of the *tali* is the most important item in a Nair marriage. A community feast follows the marriage. It is today incumbent upon the bride to live in the house of her husband or at his work place. The bringing up of children is his responsibility. He gets a share of the bride's property, if the family has got landed property. As most of the ancient *Tharvads* have become disappeared or emaciated, the bourgeoisie hold sway in the community. During a marriage the groom is advised : Don't forget to tie the *tali* in the hustle and bustle of the marriage ('Kalyanathirakkil thali kettan marakkolle').

Pulikuti is another important ritual for a lady during her first pregnancy. This is performed during the 5th, 7th or 9th month on an auspicious day. It consists of giving tamarind juice to the pregnant woman in the presence of the ladies of the locality. Ladies who live outside Kerala, especially in far-off places, seldom observe this rite. The observance of birth pollution is gradually getting into disuse. Death pollution is observed for 15 days and on the 16th day, a communal feast follows after propitiating the manes. Though puja is offered daily for these 16 days by the next of kin among the male members of the departed soul, ladies are permitted to take part in this important ritual only on the 15th and the 16th day, that too, in an insignificant way.

Menstruation :

The first appearance of the menstrual blood is celebrated with great eclat and this is called *Thirantu Kalyanam*. A communal feast, devoted exclusively to the feminine population of the village, was formerly given, but today it is restricted to the members of the *Tharvad*. The attainment of puberty is widely publicised. Menstrual pollution lasts for 3 days and married ladies are lodged in separate rooms for 4 days. No coitus is performed for these days. Those who live outside Kerala can ill-afford to observe menstrual pollution.

The significance of the appearance of the first menses on different lunar asterisms is given below : If the menarche appears on Aswini it is supposed to bring happiness ; Bharani bring vagrancy, Krittika attributes poverty ; Rohini raises hopes of sons ; Mrigashirsha makes maiden beautiful ; Adra assures chastity ; Punarvasu proclaims love to

husband; Pushya pins hypocrisy; Ashlesha announces loss of children; Magha marks abortion; Poorva Phalguni promises increase of wealth and property; Uttar Phalguni urges support to children; Hastha heralds chastity; Chitra chirps children; Swati swathes in beauty; Visakha visualises love to husband; Anuradha announces divorce; Jyestha justifies sons; Mula mounts sorrow; Purva Asadha proclaims wealth; Uthara Ashadha ululates happiness; Sharavana sends sons; Dhanistha dawns long and happy married life; Satha Bhisag suffixes possession of good husband; Purva Bhadrapada presupposes possession of good fortune; Uttara Bhadrapada ushers wealth, prosperity; and Revati reveals misery.

The appearance of the first menstrual blood on different days of the week signified different things: Sunday indicates illness, family run; Monday chastity, long life; Tuesday poverty, loss of life; Wednesday possession of children, fortune and prosperity; Thursday felicity, increased wealth and wealthy husband; Friday beauty, affection to husband and mother to many sons; and Saturday misery, ruin and barrerness.

Further the appearance of the first menses on different days after the full or new moon indicates the following attributes: Prathama—widowhood; Dwithiya—many boys; Thrithiya—gaining wealth; Chathurtha — prostitution; Panchami — beauty; Shastha — quarrel Saptami—wellbeing; Ashtami—cruelty; Navami—widowhood; Dasami —happiness; Ekadasi—malignity; Dwadasi—dealth of husband; Thrayodasi—beauty of person; Chaturdasi—sinning and fullmoon newmoon—lengthy life.

Similarly the 12 months of Malayalam year fortells the following: Metam (Apr.-May)—poverty; Etavam (May-June)—increase of cows: Mithunam (June-July)—nymphomania; Karkitakam (July-Aug)—quarrel; Chingam (Aug-Sept)—loss of children; Kanni (Sep.-Oct.)—numerous daughters; Thulam (Oct.-Nov.)—disintegration of *Tharvad*: Vrischigam (Nov.-Dec.)—excessive cruelty; Dhanu (Dec-Jan)—loss of husband; Makaram (Jan-Feb)—sugar coated words; Kumbham (Feb-Mar)—family management and Meenam (Mar-Apr)—more beauty.

III. DANCES, GAMES AND PASTIMES

As Nair women were never required to do agricultural operations, polish rice, pound spices for curries and other dredgeries or chores of the kitchendom, they spent their leisure in perfecting their traditional dances, sports and games. Thiruvathirakali is a highly sophisticated

country dance, the steps and songs of which required years to master. The songs sung for Thiruvathira required recitation by heart. Memorising of hundreds of songs of different meters without the help of mnemonic aids required patience, perseverance and talent.

Thiruvathira :[3]

The importance of the Thiruvathira festival may be imagined from the fact that married Nair ladies of Kerala fifty or sixty years ago could discard, with impunity their husbands if they failed to turn up on the occasion of the festival. The festival falls in the Malayalam month of Dhanu (December-January). Though the elaborate rituals and pageantry associated with this exclusively feminine festival are no longer observed in Kerala under the impact of western culture and the consequent establishment of monandry in the Nair society. Thiruvathira has not lost its appeal for leading a chaste life. Onam and Vishu, the two other leading festivals are universally celebrated, but Thiruvathira has remained confined to the upper castes, especially Nairs. The festival is not observed by the Hill tribes and proto-Dravidians including the Eravas. This leads one to the conclusion that it is a relic of Animism which ruled supreme over the ancient kingdom of Kerala.

The festival falls on the 6th lunar asterism, Adra (—Thiruvathira in Malayalam, from *Thiru*—sacred—and *Athira*, a corruption of Sanskrit Adra) which is believed to be the birthday of Lord Siva, the Mahadeva of the Vedas. He is, no doubt a god of fertility as is indicated by his bull symbol Nandi, and the crescent on his forehead. The celebration of Thiruvathira on the birthday of the Great God is a fertility rite and the story connected with the incineration of the Indian cupid, Kamadeva strengthens this belief.

The incineration of Kamadeva on account of his audacity in shooting his flowery arrows even on the Great God while He was taking penance after his bereavement is too familiar in India. The story of the reduction of the cupid into ashes has universal appeal in India, but the celebration of the event by the upper castes of Kerala alone is inexplicable. Holi, the Spring festival of India, is celebrated in his honour and Thiruvathira has nothing to do with the North Indian Holi. The origin of the feminine festival of Thiruvathira must be sought elsewhere. The free translation of an old poem, recited every morning and evening in Nair households by married Nair ladies gives a better explanation of the origin of this festival. It is as follows :

Long Long ago, in the *Trctha Yuga*, there lived a beautiful maiden (probably a Nair girl). She was a devotee of Parvati, the consort of

the Great mountain God, and used to observe austerities and penance in honour of her patron goddess. When she came of age, she was married to a scholar, but he died before consummation. The god of death took his soul to his realms. People felt sorry for her. Parvati and her retinue were bathing in a river adjacent to the deceased's house and heard the wail of the woman and enquired of the cause of her grief. Parvati fell upon the feet of her lord and implored Him to restore the life of her devotee's husband. She threatened Him saying that she will consider herself a widow unless her request was not conceded to. Thereupon lord Siva took a leaf of *Calotropis gigantea* and sprinkled a drop of nectar on it and restored life to the deceased. Parvati, accompanied by her maids, visited the devotee's house and blessed her for having health, wealth and children. The girl consummated the marriage. Those who recite this poem, the rustic bard has reminded us, will prolong the life of their husbands.

Rituals :

The festival which lasted for 27 days (a lunar month) in former days is celebrated for two days only for the lunar asterisms Makayiram (—Margasirsha) and Adra. Fasting is compulsory for mothers on Makayiram and Thiruvathira days. Rice is prohibited for the festival.

The most important feature of the festival is the early morning bath in the village temple tanks or canals. This is called *Thudiyum Kuliyum* (splashing and bathing). This splashing and bathing ceremony is a very elaborate affair, as it begins 3 hours before the sunrise. By daybreak the maidens and married women return home. During the three hours of the splashing and bathing, the leader of the group starts the first stanza of a peculiarly rhythmic song, accompanied by a splashing of the water in a gurgling manner. The water is splashed by the palm of the half-closed left hand, keeping it just below the surface of the water. The right palm is forcibly brought down in a slanting direction and struck against the surface of the water. This action makes the water completely ruffled and splashed in all directions, leading to the generation of a loud deep noise. The rest of the party splashes the water in the same way as has been done by the leader when they sing the refrain of the song. When the refrain is over, the leader caps her first stanza with another, beating the water as described above. The rest of the party repeats the process and in this way the song is finished. Many a song in praise of the exploits of Kamadeva is sung in this way till the day breaks when the maidens go home after rubbing themselves dry. The ladies consider it a pleasure

to perform this "water ballet" even if cold eats into their bones. The biting cold of the bleak December/January which makes the people of Kerala shiver seems to add much pleasure to their ecstatic frolic. The splashing of the water symbolises the beating of their breasts to signify the deep-felt sorrow for the physical destruction of Kamadeva.

The 'Tudiyum Kuliyum' over, the ladies take their breakfast. After dressing in their traditional fineries, 'Uzhinjal Attam' (swinging) is performed. The swinging of the maidens, according to some, is symbolic of an attempt to hang themselves on account of the death of Kamadeva.

Kaikottikkali :

The Kaikottikkali (clapping dance) comes as the culmination of every day's programme. The maidens and married women of every village assemble at a particular place for dancing to their hearts. This cotillion is a must at least for six days beginning with the first lunar asterism Aswini, though the dancing for the whole night is performed only when the asterism Adra occurs. The dance around a lighted lamp is the most colourful one in Kerala. After dancing for two or three hours every day for the first 4 days, an important ritual, namely the offer of *Ettungadi* (8 delicious substances) is observed on the fifth day, i.e., Makayiram (—Mrigasirsh—*Lambada Orionis*). The night-long dance on the Thiruvathira day ends with the rite *Pathirapolochoodal* (—pinning of the 'mid-night' flower). The Atkkamaniayan shrub (*Spaeoranthus Indica*) is the one usually worn on this occasion for which the ladies go to far away fields with singing songs and taking with them lighted lamps and spout vessels. The intention of pinning the flower in the chignon is the prolongation of the life of their husbands, in the case of married ladies, and getting the husbands of their choice, in the case of maidens.

The number of women who dances varies according to their population in any locality. There is no restriction in joining the dance, provided the participant does not break steps. The prima ballerina leads the party. She sings a stanza of a song which is repeated by the chorus singers keeping time with their hands and gently moving their toes. The body is gyrated gently, all the dancers repeating the performance in unison. The dance is very lively, and is singularly devoid of monotony on account of the varieties of steps taken according to the mood of the songs. The hopping and clapping dance (*kummi*) is the most lively piece of Thiruvathirakali. (—Kaikottikkali).

The Nair ladies have a rich repertory of Kaikottikkali and songs to last for a whole night. There is a certain amount of precedence of songs and the variety of dances to accompany them. No quick steps are taken in the beginning. The songs generally sung on the occasion relate to some exploit of Kamdeva or the marriages of mythological figures like Seetha, Savitri, Rukmini etc. The mellifluous chorus singing of Nair women, especially those in the age-group of 15-45, under the canopy of full-moon is the pleasantest oper-air opera in India. The dancing spirit is still kept alive by Nair women.

Poothiruvathira :

The Thiruvathira that comes after one's marriage is celebrated with extreme gaiety. On the Poothiruvathira day the bride is the prima ballerina and she leads the rest of the party, in two rows, for performing the rite of Pathirapoohoodal. The bride is to be attired in the orthodox manner on this occasion, and is led with Ashtamangalyam (a lighted coconut half placed in a silver plate along with other seven auspicious sights), Kuthuvilakku (lamp with a chain) etc. The Pathirappoovu mentioned earlier is first pinned in the chignon of the bride. On her return home she is to circumambulate the sacred *Tulsi thara* (where a plant *Ocimum sanctum* is planted). The flowers used for the ritual are then offered to the groom. The whole ceremony is marked by the intermittent ululation of married women and joyous shouts.

The origin of Thiruvathira and the rituals connected with it bear ample testimony to the fact that it is a fertility rite.

Onam :[4] Onam is the national festival of Kerala. It is celebrated for 10 days in the month of Chingam (Aug-Sept). It is the duty of ladies for Onam to decorate the place of worship to offer flowers of various hues, as they excel in aesthetic tastes. The preparation of the mud platform for worship and cleansing it daily with cowdung emulsion etc. fall on women. The gathering of flowers is done by boys and girls. The welcoming of Mahabali with the offer of coconuts, cakes etc. is the duty of ladies.

Swinging (*Uzhinjal Attam*) is an important sport of the ladies for Onam and Thiruvathira. The swinging is accompanied by singing songs appropriate to the occasion. *Pazhukiakali* is a game specially liked by girls during this season. A few girls sit in a circle facing the leader of the game who sits inside the centre. Girls pass on an arecanut through their hands which the leader cannot see as the hands are clasped behind their bodies. The leader guesses the holder

of the arecanut at a particular time from her facial expression only. While the game is played the girls recite songs appropriate to the occasion.

Net and lion : 'Net and lion' game of the girls show that they are not lagging behind their male counterparts in showing their physical prowess. A few able-bodied girls stand in a circle with outstretched arms interlocked. Another girl is let in first, but she is not allowed to go out of the 'net', unless she breaks the net formed by her friends. When she tries to break the cordon to get out of the net, the girls apply pressure on the interlocked arms so that the girl is not free to get out of it. While making frantic mock efforts to break the girl implores her friends to let her go on many a pretext. The requests are addressed in songs appropriate to the occasion.

Request—Let me give way to go home my dear friends
For my mother calls me to suckle !
Answer —Let your mother call you to suckle the breasts
But there is no way to go home dear friend !
Request—Let me give way to go home, my dear friends
For my father is calling me to give me a new cloth !
Answer —Let your father call you to give a new cloth
But there is no way to go home dear friend !
Request—Let me give way to go home my friends
For my paternal uncle calls to give me a *guava* fruit !
Answer —Let your paternal uncle call you to give a *guava* fruit
But there is no way to go home dear friend !
Request—Let me give way to go home, my dear friends
For my uncle is calling me to give a dice !
Answer —Let your uncle call you to give a dice
But there is no way to go home, dear friend !
Request—Let me give way to go home my dear friends
For my eldest brother calls me with red-hot eyes !
Answer —Let your eldest brother call you, let his eyes be red hot !
But there is no way to go home, dear friend !
Request—Let me give way to go home my dear friends
For my youngest brother is calling me !
Answer —Let your youngest brother call you
But there is no way to go home, dear friend !
Request—Let me give way to go home my dear friends
For my aunty is calling me to give *Kuppari* !
Answer —Let your aunty call you to give *Kuppari*,
But there is no way to go home, dear friend !

There is another game of the girls in which a group asks for a bride to which the other group replies in the negative. This game is in the question-and-answer form with humorous singer of songs. The songs sung in this regard are too lengthy to reproduce here.

Some of the games of ladies are almost extinct. *Mookel Vidya* and *Kaithamara Attam* have become extinct in central Kerala. In *Mukkel Vidya* a girl dances balancing a decorated stick on her nasal bridge while another lady sings a song appropriate to the occasion to the accompaniment of the music produced by beating small drum. In *Kaitharama Attam* a girl holds on two bunches of flowers on her right and left hands and dances to the accompaniment of an appropriate song and drum-beating. *Ammana Attam* (throwing the balls) is not an easy job to perform as none of the three balls should fall to the ground. Circling rings on toes and thumbs at the same time is also done by women.

Vishu : The third important festival of Kerala is Vishu which is celebrated in the month of Metam (April-May). This is primarily concerned with the beining of the agricultural operations. The women are commissioned to light the auspicious sight (*Kani*).

Though there are several feasting and fasting days, games and pastimes for women, brevity compels us to omit even their names. The observance of fast on Monday, *Ekadashi, Janmashtami* etc. are important. The 'dos and don'ts' for pregnant women, the omens about them and the restrictions of food placed on the fair sex are also omitted here.

The folk ballads of Kerala depict the exploits of at least two famous ladies i.e. *Unniyarcha* and *Kunhikanni*, besides *Bala* and Kularmala Konki. The exploits of Unniyarcha thrill the hearts of every woman in Kerala even today. She has been filmed. The ballads are too long to insert here. The life of the women depicted in the folk ballads and songs is left out here.

Conclusion :

An attempt has been made here to depict the position of Nair women of Kerala with the help of folk sayings and practices though fragmantary it is from the social point of view. The impact of Western culture has been the cause of the disintegration of the matriarchal system. The proverbs tell us the position of women as they existed before the beginning of the present century. Though they reigned supreme in the social structure, there is no tradition of a gynocratic government. Nair women today have lost their evviable

position in the affairs of the community and this writer will not be surprised if they are reduced to mere chattels and cattles in the years to come. We do not see a silver lining in their future as the traditional values attached to the culture of Nairs are being trampled. They have given up their rituals. Their festivals are neglected. And the day is not far off for their cultural downfall.

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AJOY KUMAR NANDI

EVOLUTION OF THE HINDU MARRIAGE SYSTEM

Marriage, as an institution, is as old as the human society, and like the society, it evolved through several stage before it has reached the present stage. The Hindu marriage system also passed through these stages, and has still retained those primitive elements which it acquired while passing through those stages. Indeed many primitive ideas and rituals are quite obvious in the Hindu marriage system. In the following pages the writer have endeavoured to treat the evolation of the Hindu marriage system.

ANTHROPOLOGISTS like McLennan, Morgan, Kohler, Lowie and others think that the primitive state of man was one of unqualified promissuity. By promiscuity we mean loose cohabitation. Man must have began as a promiscuous being, since the most primitive men had no idea about norms. With the rise of culture, attempts were made to regulate promiscuous relationship. As a result, group marriage came into existence, in which the young men of a particular clan married the young women of another clan. The group marriage was gradually replaced by the intermediate stages of polyandry, marriages of the Beena type and ultimately by the monogamous marriages.

That the Hindu marriage system had undergone a similar process of development is evident from an Aryan mythology. It can be conjectured that once promiscuous relationship was prevalent among the primitive ancestors of the Hindus. The Aitariya Brahmana, while explaining Creation, narrates that the Prajapati, the original Creator married his daughter for this purpose. There is also a reference to the sexual connections between Pushan and his mother. (Rg. Veda, VI, 55). It seems that this practice began to be discountenanced later, because the later Sacred Books, like the Matsya and the Vayu Purana, while speaking the same thing of Brahma, the Creator, reserve that he became cautious, took the disguise of a deer and went to his daughter who also had disguised herself as a *rohita* deer. Similar cases are also found in the Harivamsa. Satarupa became the wife of her father Visistha Prajapati. Manu married his daughter, Ila ; and Janhu, his daughter, Janhavi-Ganga. The Sacred Books abound in stories of this type. The Magians of Iran practised for a long time the "Khetuk-das"

(i.e. next-of-kin marriage) amongest very near relations (between mother and son, and father and daughter, and brother and sister).

Intermarriage of brothers and sisters was continued for a long time. The Achaemenian royal house practised the brother-sister marriage. According to Herodotus, Cambyses, the son of Cyrus the Great, started the brother-sister marriage in the Achaemenian royal house. He carried the system to Egypt when he had completed his conquest of that country. In the coastal regions of the Eastern Mediterranean, a similar practice appears to have been prevalent in those and earlier times amongst holders of high sacerdotal offices. Frazer thinks that this was owing to the wide prevalence of mother-kin succession in these regions. That the brother-sister marriage was once in vogue in India is evident from the Sacred Books. There is a story in the Taittiriya Brahmana of Sita-Savitri, the daughter of Prajapati, who wanted the love of her brother Soma. Soma did not want her but his other sister Sraddha. Then Sita-Savitri sought the advice of her father who gave her an amulet, with the help of which she succeeded in winning Soma. But this system seems to have already been looked with abherrence. We read in the hymn of Yama and his twin sister that brother-sister sex relation was considered proper in "ancient" time, but wrong "now". So when Yami, the sister of Yama, declares her love for her brother, Yama rejects her by saying that Varuna would see and be angry. Yami argues on the contrary that some of the gods of old cohabited with kin. So it appears that the brother-sister marriage which had been in vogue, fell into disuse in the Rigvedic period.

In course of time promiscuous relationship was replaced by the group marriage, which gave rise to the organisation known as Ganagotra. We have a story in the Puranas that sixty sisters, who were daughters of Daksa, formed into seven groups of 10, 13, 27, 4, 2, 2, 2, and took seven Prajapati husbands. This sort of marriage was probably a survival of "group marriage". The word "Ganika" clearly derives from group-wives. Group marriage led to the foundation of two practices—sororate and levirate. Sororate is the rule whereby a man who marries a woman has a pre-emptive right to marry also her younger sisters, whereas under the levirate, when a man dies his widow becomes the wife of one of his brothers. Frazer argues that as levirate points to the marriage of women to a group of brothers, so the sororate points the marriage of men to a group of sisters. When the two customs are taken together, they point to the prevalence of marriage between a group of husbands as brothers, and a group of wives as sisters. Morgan also thinks it is a relic of group marriage.

Levirate was common to the Indo-European family. It was prevalent also among the Iranians. This custom came to be known as Noyoga and must have been in vogue for a long time, at least in Rig-widow was taken charge of by the brother of the deceased, who could Vedic India. It appears from Rig-Veda (X, 18, 8 and X 40, 2) that a widow was taken charge of by the brother of the deceased, who could marry her with the permission of the elders.

The Dharmasutras of Gautama have been roughly assigned to the 7th century B.C., i.e., towards the close of the Brahmanic period. The Vedic custom of marrying a brother-in-law was in vogue during Gautama's time, for we find in his Dharmasutras, "A woman whose husband is dead, and who desires offspring (may bear a son) to her brother-in-law.....on failure of a brother-in-law (she may obtain offspring) by (cohabiting with) a Sapinda, a Sagotra, a Samana-pravara, or one who belongs to the same caste."

The Mahabharata abounds in a number of instances of Levirate which prove that the system also prevailed them. Vyasa and Vichitra-virya were half-brothers. When Vichitravirya died childless, his mother wanted her daughters-in-law to produce children by levirate with Vyasa. Vyasa consented and had by them respectively two children, Dhritarastra and Pandu.

Baudhayan Dnarmasastra also recognises the system of Niyoga as a legal institution, though the later law-givers have decried it. He says, "A widow shall avoid during a year the use of honey, meat, spirituous liquor, and salt, and sleep on the ground." Then referring to an early law-giver, he adds, "Maudgalya declares that she shall do so during six months. After the expiry of that time she may, with the permission of her *gurus*, bear a son to her brother-in-law, in case she has no son." Though the system of Niyoga is admitted by Vasistha, it seems to be fast disappearing because regarding the ownership of a son he comments, "There is a dispute among the wise and some says, "The son belongs to the begetter."

From the time of Manu the levirate system began to be censured. While recognising the system thus, "On failure of issue by her husband, a woman who has been authorised, may obtain, in the proper manner prescribed, the desired offspring by cohabitation with a brother-in-law or with some other Sapinda of the husband," else where Manu contradicts the above statement by saying, "By twice-born men a widow must not be appointed to cohabit with any other than her husband ; for they who appoint her to another man will violate the eternal law." Levirate was also prevalent in Europe. A spartan law attributed to Lycurgus required an old man who had a young wife to

introduce to her a youngman whose bodily and mental qualities he approved, that he might beget children on her.

Many instances of Sororal polygyny are found in the Sacred Books. Thus we find the following story in the Taittiriya Samhita ii. 3, 5. "Prajapati had thirty-three daughters he gave them to king Soma, among them he only went to Rohini. The others jealous returned (to their father) : he went after them, he sought them again ; but he (the father) did not give them again to him. He said to him, "Take an oath that you will go to them alike, then I will give them to you again." He took an oath, he gave them back to him." We find similar instances in the Mahabharata. Brhadratha, son of Uparichara, married two sisters. Vichitravirya also married two sisters.

Two principles are involved in the group marriage and each complements the other. One is that when a man contracts a marriage with a family he marries all the marriageable females of that family. The other principle is that when a woman contracts a marriages with another family she marries all the marriageable males of that family. The first principle projects into the practice of polygamy and the second principle, into the practice of polyandry. McLennan thinks that the custom widespread among savages, of female infanticide created a superfluity men in each tribe. It was due to the death of women which was the consequence of female infantacide that the tribes practiced polyandry. Moreover, where there custom of group marriage or polyandry was prevalent, the paternity of a child could not be known. As the mother of a child was known, kinship was reckoned in the female line to the exclusion of the male. According to McLennan, the conceptions of consanguity and incest have nothing to do with the custom of exogamy, because these ideas originated much later. To quote McLennan's words, "As exogamy and polyandry are referable to one and the same cause -a want of balance between the sexes-we are forced to regard all the exogamous races as having originally been polyandrous.....Therefore, we must hold it to be beyond dispute that among exogamous races the first system of kinship was that which recognised blood ties through mothers only."

There are some vague allusions to polyandry in the Vedic mythology. However, we have the classic instance of Draupadi having the five Pandavas as her husbands. But Vyasa judged the marriage to be against usage and, as such, against dharma. Yudhistira, on his part, put forward three reasons to justify the marriage. First, he justified the marriage by illustrating the marriage of Jatila with seven Rsis, and Varksi with ten brothers called Prachetas as precedents for the practice the Pandavas had followed. Secondly, he justified it as righteous

because it was in accordance with the wishes of his mother. And lastly, the marriage was justified by the tradition of his family. "We follow the path which has been trodden by (our ancestors) in succession." It was from the time of Aitareya Brahmana (800 B.C.) that the system seems to have been discredited, because a man could have many wives but a woman could have only one husband.

Polyandry and marriages of the Beena type are the intermediate stages in the evolution of monogamous marriages. "Beena" is the name of marriage which prevails among the Sinhalese in Ceylon. In it the daughter lives in the father's house where she is visited by her husband, and her children become her father's kinsmen. But the term "beena" marriage was extended by Morgan as a technical term to imply all marriages of this type in which the husband visited the wife. This type of marriage finds its analogues in the Mahabharata stories of the marriage of Arjuna with Ulupi and Chitrangada, and of Bhima with Hidimba. In all these cases it is to be noted that the sons remained with the mother.

The evolutionists believe that the matriarchal form of family organisation is prior to the patriarchal. In the matriarchal societies husbands are only visitors and have no authority over the children. The children live with the mother and the mother's brother becomes the habitual guardian of the family. As the maternal system of descent is found in all parts of the world where social advance stands at a certain level, it can be assumed that every group which advances to a culture passes through this stage. The matrilineal system was also found among Aryan peoples. The Lycians, reports Herodotus, have this peculiar custom wherein they resemble no other men, they derive their mothers, and not from their fathers, and through mothers reckon their kin. According to the Mahabharata a matrilineal system was prevalent in the kingdom of Mahismati about the Narbada river, where the women had liberty to choose a plurality of husbands, and among the Arattas, probably in the Punjab, "whose heirs are their sisters' children, not their own." The Pandyan dynasty seems to have been originally matrilineal, as Tamil poems allude to its founder as a woman. Megasthenes reports, it was founded by a daughter of Heracles. striking : "Unrelated by blood was she to the man that she slew."

The process of transformation of the matriarchal society to the patriarchal one was gradual. Bachofen thinks that a grim struggle took place between declining mother-right and rising father-right in that process of transformation. He accordingly points to the Oresteia of Aeschylus as an illustration of that struggle. F. Engels sums up the views of Bachofen in the following admirable language, "Cly-

temnestra has slain her husband Agamemnon, just returned from the Trojan War, for the sake of her lover Aegisthus; but Orestes, her son by Agamemnon, avenges his father's murder by slaying his mother. For this he is pursued by the Erinyee, the demonic defenders of mother right, according to which matricide is the most heinous and inexpiable of crimes. But Apollo, who through his oracle has incited Orestes to commit this deed, and Athena, who is called in as arbiter-the two deities which were represent the new order, based on father right-protect him. Athena hears both sides. The whole controversy is briefly summarised in the debate which now ensures between Orestes and the Erinyes. Orestes declares that Clytemnestra is guilty of a double outrage; for in killing her husband she also killed his father. Why then have the Erinyes persecuted him and not Clytemnestra, who is much the greater culprit? The reply is striking:

"Unrelated by blood was she to the man that she slew."

"The murder of a man not related by blood, eventhough he be the husband of the murderess, is expiable and does not concern the Erinyes. Their function is to avenge only murders among blood-relatives, and the most heinous of all these, according to mother right, is matricide. Apollo now intervenes in defence of Orestes. Athena calls upon the Areopagites—the Athenian jurors—to vote on the question. The votes for acquital and for the conviction are equal. Then Athena, as president of the court, casts her vote in favour of Orestes and acquits him. Father right has gained the day over mother-right."

D. D. Kausambi has discerned a similar conflict between mother right and father right in the dialogues between Urvasi and Pururavas as narrated in the Rigveda, X.95. Pururavas has been married to Urvasi; but he is to be sacrificed after having begotten a son and successor upon Urvasi. Pururavas asks, "When will the son that is born yearn after his father? He will have shed flooding tears, knowing (what happened). Who dares separate the wedded pair in accord as long as the (ancestral) fire burns at the house of the fathers-in-law?" Urvasi—"I answer you, let him shed ample tears, he will not, heedful of (my) sacred office; I shall send you that of thine that thou hast with us. Go to thy destiny; thou canst reach me."

It is a kind of sacred marriage where the husband is to be sacrificed ultimately. Urvasi and her associates like Menaka, Ghrtachi, Alambusa etc were all "apsaras". The "apsaras" followed a matriarchal custom which required them not to submit to a husband as permanent lord and master. While violating Rambha Ravana remarked, "aparanam patirnasti," and conscious neither of sin nor

crime. In the whole course of the dialogue Pururavas was pleading for the father-right "Who dares sepearate the weeded pair in accord as long as the (anceastral) fire burns at the house of the fathers-in-law ?" But Urvasi was still championing the cause of mother-right.

From the condition of mother-right the transition to father-right took place through the institution of marriage by capture. Beyond a certain stage, the ritualistic basis of promiscuity was condemned and exogamy displaced endogamy as a general principle that is, sexual relations became restricted to persons in other groups, involving commonly the obtaining of the woman from these groups by violence. According to Dionysus of Halicarnas, this type of marriage was prevalent among ancient Greeks ; it existed also among the Romans and the Arabs. It prevailed among ancient Semites. Capturing women for purposes of matrimony is common to primitive society. The Rakshasa type of marriage is equivalent to the system of acquiring bride by violence. "In the Raksasa, the girl is carried off by force, after killing (her relatives) and cleaving (their heads), while she weeps and they weep."

Exogamy is the prohibition of marriage within the supposed blood-kinship, as denoted by the family name. Such marriage, among many backward races, is reckoned incentuous, and is punishable by death. The general rule of the Hindu marriage system is that a man must not marry a woman belonging to the same gotra because all the members of the gotra are theoretically supposed to have descended from the same ancestor. Marriage can not take place between relations within six degrees on the mother's or the father's side. Originally gotra meant "Cow-shed", and later on it came to denote the "family" or the "clan". The "gotra" of a family is said to be named after the rishi-ancestor who founded the family in the immemorial past. Closely connected with the "gotra" is the other term "pravara". "A pravara is a passage, or rather perhaps the names contained in such a passage, in the vedic formula used in the worship of his ancestors by a follower of any particular vedic school ; and the use of pravara involves the recital, at specific points in the sacrificial ritual, of the names of certain quasi-dified ancestors who followed that particular school of vedic worship also followed by the descendant reciting the pravara, and who are commemorated in the act of worship." (Hutton) Marriage is also restricted according to pravara. It may be that two or more gotras have their pravara in common. In that case marriage is not permissible, eventhough man and woman belong to two different gotras.

So far as the paternal side is concerned marriage is regulated in terms of gotra, and with reference to the maternal side there is an

injunction that a person shall not marry a woman who is a sapinda on his mother's side, up to the sixth degree in ascending or descending line. The three terms "gotra", "pravara" and "sapinda" are connected with the Hindu laws of exogamy.

Max Weber observes, "Out of this practice (i.e., the practice of acquiring brides by violence) should have developed marriage by purchase." Marriage by purchase is one of the recognised forms of vedic marriage. "In vedic times brides were won by rich presents to their fathers, though a certain discredit would seem to have been attached to the sale of daughters." The elements of bride-price (sulka) are discernable in the Asura form of marriage, where the father of the bride is gladdened with money. Vasistha mentions the Manusha rite in place of the Asura form of marriage. He says, "If, after making a bargain with the father, a suitor marries a damsel purchased for money, that is called the Manusha-rite." In the Mahabharata it is mentioned that Pandu paid to the Madra in gold, jewels, elephants, horses, cars and various other articles for the hand of his sister.

Cross-cousin marriage is a by-product of exogamy. It is a marriage between the children of brothers and sisters. There are two varieties: (1) Mother's brother's daughter (2) Father's sister's daughter. Tylor gives an explanation why cross-cousin marriage is permissible while parallel cousin marriage is tabooed. He assumes that the custom arose in communities subdivided into exogamous halves with fixed rules of descent. Here parallel cousins will always belong to the same half and will therefore be prevented from marrying by the exogameous law, while cross-cousins will belong to complementary halves and remain unaffected by the exogamous law. As for example, a man and his brothers and sisters all belong to their fathers half of the tribe, A. The children of this man and those of his brothers will also be A, and as such they are not permitted to intermarry. But his sisters must marry men of B, i.e. outside A, and their children are all B whom the brother's children (i.e. A) must marry. There are also other reasons for the prevalence of cross-cousin marriage. Swanton suggests that the motive of keeping property within the family circle may well lead to marriage with the father's own sister's daughter or the mother's own brother's daughter. Another reason is that where the caste system prevails, union with a person of lesser rank can be avoided by cross-cousin marriage. The earliest reference to the cross cousin marriage is to be found in the Baudhayana Dharmasutras. Baudhayana mentions the marriage of the daughter of a maternal uncle and that of the daughter of a paternal aunt as customs peculiar to the

South. There is also a faint trace of this system of marriage in the fifty-fifth verse of seventh Mandala of the Rigveda to which Madhavaacharya in his gloss on Parasara, refers in support of that system. We find instances of mother's brother's daughter type of cross-cousin marriage in the Mahabharata. The marriage of Arjuna with Subhadra, of Krishna with Rukmini, was of this type.

A. Lang says, "On the whole, wide prohibitions of marriage are archaic, the widest are savage; the narrowest are modern and civilised." In that sence the Hindu prohibition is wide and therefore old. The Hindu marriage system has all those primitive rules and regulations which have been acquired as a result of sedimentation incourse of its development through different stages.

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M. SURYANARAYAN

THE SIGNIFICANE OF GAMES IN SAORA CULTURE

Mr. Suryanarayan is now serving as a Senior Research Fellow of the Anthropological Survey of India, South India Station. This is written from his field report for M. Sc. in Andhra University.

SAORAS are one of the aboriginal tribes in India, widely scattered all over Srikakulam District in Andhra Pradesh, Koraput and Ganjam Districts in Orissa. The present study is confined to the Saoras of Srikakulam District, where the Saora population is 67,137.

Saora games play not only a recreational role but also have an educative value. Their day to day observations and mode of life reflect in their games. They teach them how they have to behave and act in their routine way of life closely knitted with their environmental pursuits.

Moon light nights are very interesting to watch in a Saora village. Boys and girls gather in their groups for playing games. Some others spend their time by sitting at elderly persons to hear short stories and riddles. Still others spend their nights by singing songs and cutting jokes at each other. It does not mean that they play their games strictly during nights. Young boys and girls gather at one place after their parents left for fields and play games imitating their parents roles. Boys mainly imitate the activities like ploughing, hunting, food-gathering, fishing and on attending shandies, whereas girls imitote the roles like bringing water, pounding, grinding, cooking and hoeing. The following is the detailed account of the various Saora games :

Ayo-didan : It is a fish game played by the boys and girls in the age group of 6-12 years. They collect together and form a circle by holding the arms of each others. A boy stands inside whose eyes are covered with a cloth and is asked to catch and identify a person in the circle which will be rotating gently. A person in the circle asks questions and he answers like this :

Where have you gone ?
To sea.
For what purpose ?
To catch fishes.
With what you caught ?
With a trap.

In what you brought ?
With leaves.
With what you cut ?
With a knife.
In what you cooked ?
In a pot.
With whom you ate ?

The person has to reveal the name of the victim whom he is holding in the hands. If he says correctly the eyes of the victim will be closed and will repeat as before. If he fails in the identification he has to continue until he succeeds.

Ganat-didan : It is a digging of tubers game played by the boys and girls between 6 to 12 years. Some boys and girls sit by stretching their hands and feet. Two to three boys imitate digging of tubers and cut away the stretched hands and feet saying that they are removing the unnecessary roots and bushes around. Then they say that the persons sitting are tubers and set fire to them. After a few minutes they ask the persons whether they are cooked or not ? The persons sitting cry like this : "Rabadun, Rabadun Sakkar (Not yet boiled)". A few minutes later they touch the heads of each person and see whether they are boiled or not and ask them whether they are boiled. The people sitting cry : "Sakkar, Sakkar (Boiled, Boiled)." Then they pretend eating them and go away.

Atum-didan : It is a game imitating watching of cucumbers. Boys and girls from 6 to 12 years play this game. A person stands in the middle stretching his both hands, small boys and girls sit hanging to each finger. A boy acts as an old person watching the cucumbers and a girl as his wife. The girl says to her husband to keep watching till she returns with food. But the person goes for bath with a friend to a stream. By the time he returns a thief takes away two to three cucumbers (A person acts as a thief). His wife comes with food and counts the cucumbers and finds the deficit. She asks her husband where he has gone ? He replies that he has gone for bath. She quarrels with her husband for not waiting till her arrival.

Selang-didan : It is a play of potter's wheel. One person stands in the middle and 5 to 6 girls sit and streatch their legs and all join their legs to the person standing in the middle making a circle. Then they raise their hands and males (generally) standing in between two girls hold their hands firmly and raise their bodies to 3 feet above the ground and rotate like a potters wheel all saying, "Selang, Selang, Selang (Pots, Pots, Pots)." Boys of 8 to 15 years play this game.

Kasim-didan : The girls between 6 to 12 years stand in a circle and join their hands making the appearence of a fowl house. In the middle a boy or a girl stands like a fowl and another male stands beside as a dog watching the fowl. One person acts as a jackal standing outside the circle. Jackal tries to enter the house but the girls standing in a circle obstruct the jackal. But he enters forcebly somehow and the dog fights with the jackal and the fowl come out and the jackal also follows. Then the fowl enters inside. During this process if the jackal just touches the fowl it is considered to be successful, if not it is continued till he succeeds. Persons change and repeat this game.

Lolo-didan : (a) It is a game imitating the act of hoeing. Some girls imitate hoeing with small hooked sticks. When they come to a particular point a person hiding suddenly jumps out and threatens them like a bear. Then all the girls run away and again start hoeing after a few minutes.

(b) In the same manner as above girls will be hoeing and girls sit at a particular point. When they approach the girl one of them cries "Kumbul sung, Kumbul sung (Rat house Rat house)", and asks her partners to help in digging the rat house. All start digging and the rat runs to a little distance away. Again they repeat and finally catch the rat, set fire to it and eat after it is boiled.

Kimmae-didan : In this one person acts as a tiger. Others acts as goats. Yet another acts as a *shepherd*. He takes the goats to grazing land. The boys cry like goats and walk on four legs, the shephered imitates like tending them. The tiger enters and tries to take away the goats. The shephered attacks the tiger. If the tiger succeeds it will take away some goats. The same is repeated for several times.

Gudi-didan : It is a game imitating the trap game in hunting birds and wild fowls. Two persons stand oppositly stretch and hold each other's arms upwards making and arch. Small girls and boys holding ones back pass through them. They suddenly block one and he or she tries to escape. If he/she is caught he/she has to stop and the others have to continue and it will be played till all are caught. While passing though they cry like this "Jam Jam Jamparui Gudia a tattae".

Remang-didan : It is a game played by the boys and girls of the age group of 6 to 12 years. They sit in a circular fashion. One person holds a piece of cloth in his hand and walks around them pretending as if he is placing the cloth at each persons back side. Finally he drops at one's behind. One should not see behind and also should not reveal, if one observes the placing of cloth. If he knows by himself he gets up and beats the person who placed the cloth, if not the persons who

placed the cloth makes a round the circle and beats the person one whose back side he placed the cloth and he sits there replacing the person who then repeats the game.

Sai-didan : This is also a game played by boys and girls between 6 to 15 years. They sit in two rows facing each other. One row represents one party with a person standing behind. All persons in one side place their hands opend at the behind. The person standing their behind pretends placing a small object at each person's hand and the person who stands on the other side has to identify correctly at whose hands he placed the object. If he can identify correctly his side takes the chance of placing the object, if not the other party continues till this person identifies correctly.

Demna-didan : One person stretches his arm and all the persons playing have to put their pointed fingures on it. He will show a star on the sky while they are seeing it, he suddenly joins the other arm to this. Those persons who smell this retreat their fingures and the person who keeps his finger till the last is called as thief. His eyes will be closed with a cloth and the other members hide near by. He will come out stretching hands. If he touches a person the cloth will be tied to that person and it will be continued similarly, if not he has to continue till he is able to touch a person. In this game all the members should not go far off and has to confine to the limits which will be first determined.

Based-didan This is a game played by the boys between 10 to 20 years of age. Two parties are required to represent each containing 4 persons. Rectangular lines are drawn with ash and at the 4 corners of rectangle 4 person of one party stand. One person from the other party has to enter into the inner rectangular place, while doing so the persons at four corners keeping the lines try to touch the person entering inside. If the person is touched they come out and the persons standing outside have to keep watching the lines. If not the person who has gone in try to touch any person of his party standing outside, while doing so the person watching try to touches the person of the other party. If he succeeds in touching a person's hand he gains one measure of salt. They try to gain as many measures of salt without being out. If they are out the other party take the chance. The more the number of measures one party gains is considered to be the winner of the game.

Pander-didan : This is a girls game of 10 to 20 years of age group. Two parties with four members in each form and play the game. 4 girls sit in a square by holding each other's hands stretched and join their hands. The girls of the other party who stand in between two girls place their heads and hands in a bending posture inside the square, over their joined hands, keeping their legs behind the square.

These 4 girls have to jump into the square like rabbits, while doing so their legs should not be touched by the stretched hands in such a case they are considered to be out and they have to sit and the other party takes the chance of jumping. While jumping the girls stretching their hands raise considerbly to make them out by touching their hands to the jumping party. If the jumping party succeeds they continue this till they are out. The more the number of times one party wins, it is considered to be the winner of the game.

Basser-didan : This is a youth's game which we can as well equate to the tug-of-war game of ours with some variation. One person acts like a Basser (Iguana). A person is tied round his back with a rope of 6 yards. A small boy is asked to hold over his stomach as its issue holds like Iguana and crawls on his fore and hind limbs. A person holds the rope at the other end and a tug-of-war is exhibited. It is generally believed that one cannot defeat the Basser. A person who wins over the Basser is considered to be having more strength.

Arta-didan : This is a game of youth's. A yoke is brought and at one end a person holds it firmly or it is fitted closely to a wall. A person embracing the yoke underneath with his hands (keeping the head to the free end of the yoke) and raise the legs against the ground to a considerable hight and gets down gently like taking pullaps. The more the number of times one succeeds the more is the credit.

Ravun-didan : This is another youth's game. A yoke is tied horizontally over two vertical poles (6 feet above). A rope will be placed over this leaving the two ends hanging one on either sides. At one side a person holds the rope with his hands and placing his legs on the other side of the rope. He has to climb with the help of this rope (without falling down) and has to show his face above the yoke. The number of times one passes his face over the yoke is his credit.

Pappa-didan : Boys over 12 years of age play this game. A party of 4 persons keep watching and another party of 4 persons play the game. 4 persons keep lines at 1, 2, and 4. The members have to enter into A and B rooms without being out by the persons watching. As in the case of *Based-didan* they have to be one the lines and have to keep in lines and have to touch the persons that are passing through the lines. When all the persons come into A and B rooms the persons at 1, 2, and 3 change to 5, 6 and 7. The persons in the A and B rooms have to come to C or D rooms. Then after they have entered C and D the person at 4 comes to the 8th place and persons in the C and D have to come out of the lines. The persons watching at 5, 6 and 7 change to 9, 10 and 11 places. During the process if any person crossing the line is touched the whole party has to keep watching and the other party

takes the chance of crossing. The credit goes to that party which gains more points in crossing the lines successfully.

Ayo-didan, Ganai-didan, Atum-didan, Kasim-didan, Lolo-didan Kimmae-didan, and *Gudi-didan,* which have a functional value are connected with the economic and social life of the Saoras. *Selang-didan, Pander-didan* and *Basser-didan* show how keen they observe nature which they imitate in the games. *Remang-didan, Sai-didan* and *dumma-didan* are purely ment for recreation and we also find these games with slight modifications among plains people. It is difficult to ascertain however that they are diffused from the plains. We also find *Salagudu-didan* and *Centra-didan* which can be equatted to our Kabadi and Koko games, which I have not described as they are well know to all. Besides we find games confined to youths like *Based-didan, Basser-didan, Arta-didan, Ravun-didan* and *Pappa didan.* In some of them, the strength of a person is exhibited. But we do not find corresponding games to girls of this age by which time all most all girls settle in their married life and pay no attention on games.

With a result of the increasing contacts with the people of the plains in due course we may find the traditional games may be oriented towards the plains games. Because it is possible as many of the school teachers who come from plains are paying more attention to their own games rather than encouraging the tribal games.
games.

Anthropological Survey of India, South India Station.

TO BE SHORTLY PUBLISHED

BENGAL—CASE STUDY OF RURAL MARKET, ByP. K. Bhowmick, D. Phil, D.Sc., University of Calcutta. Introduction—Sankar Sen Gupta Foreword Prof. N. K. Bose, FNI

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INDIAN PUBLICATIONS
3, BRITISH INDIAN STREET CALCUTTA-1, Ph: 23-6334.

BOOK REVIEW

THE PEOPLE OF TIBET, by Sir Charles Bell, Oxford University Press, first published. 1928 reprint 1968, demy, XIX + 319 pp, maps, photos, price Rs. 37.50.

THE RELIGION OF TIBET, by Sir Charles Bell, Oxford University Press, first print 1931, reprint 1968, demy XVI + 235 pp, maps, photos Price Rs. 30.

The author is a famous Tibetologist who has lived the country for nearly twenty years in connection with his official duty and has recorded invaluable informations about the land and the people which is fast being changed, and remodeled. His first book on Tibet—"Tibet Past and Present" contains the history, specially the political position in Tibet in eariler days to the begining of this century and the above two volumes form a sequal to author's earlier work and like that these two volumes are important historical documents. These books are as usual of high merits and they had great demand which is why the volumes are reprinted again after a lapse of about 40 and 37 years respectively. The author has said in the preface that "The area of Tibet is large. Intercourse of one part with another is restricted, for the country is difficult and the means of travel are primitive". The people follows that manners and customs which vary in different districts. In present day Tibet white man's life and customs are getting penetrated owing to developmental work and political reason.

In the first book the author has described the people in their own homes in the following chapters :—1. Geographical, 2. Historical; 3 Shepherds and Herdsmen, 4, 5, & 6. The Peasants, 7, 8, & 9. The Nobility, 10. The Traders, 11. A Mercantile Nation, 12. Beggars, 13. Robbers, 14. The Women, 15. The Position of Women, 16. Women's Work and Recreation, 17 & 18. Marriage, 19. The Children, 20. Children and Others, 21. Food, 22. Drinking and Smoking, 23 & 24. Ceremonial Etiquette, 25. Amusements, 26. The New Year Games at Lhasa, 27. The Rites with appendixes, bibliography and index. The headings of the contents speak of the range of the book. The author has done every possible justice to the cause.

The Second book—*Religion of Tibet*—has two parts with fifteen chapters. They are—

1. A Hidden Land, 2. The Old faith, 3. Gotama, the Buddha, 4. Buddhism comes to Tibet, 5. Expulsion and Return, 6. Buddhism Becomes the National Religion, 7. Cotton-clad Mi-La, 8. The Yellow Hats, 9. Buddhism Captures Mongolia, 10. The Priest Enthroned, 11. Christian Missionaries in Lhasa, 12. Modern Times, in part one : how it came. 13. The Power of Monesteries, 14. Priest as Civil and Military

Officers, 15. A Deity as King in chapter two : how it rules along with appendix and index.

Sir Bell very rightly expressed his categorical views from his own experiences and association with the sons of the soil since he worked as an administrator in the land for about one fifth of a century and has acquired such knowledge by which he can say that "Tibet does not lack land for cultivation but lacks the men to till it".

Any student of Tibetology or an interested person would find these volumes of considerable interest. There are such observations and data in matters where modern Tibetologists may not accept author's approach or his views. But that is irrelevant to the main point that Sir Bell's obviously wide knowledge and experence of Tibet has not in any way inhibited him from putting the real, original and striking ideas and the points on of life and living of the people he discussed and thereby the study provides abundant food for thought for the discreminating readers.

Dr. B. N. Shastri

LAND AND THE PEOPLE OF THE HIMALAYA, Prof. Dr. S. C. Bose, Indian Publications, Calcutta, Demy, xiv + 284, maps, photos (1968), Rs. 30.00.

The author of the book writes in the preface "The book has rather been printed in haste to present it before the world geographers on the occasion of their visit to India in connection with the International Geographers Union Meetings in December, 1968". He also writes "I myself have travelled widely in the Himalaya and studied its physiography and its people, so far as I could, in a lone effort. The result is this book" which has twenty-three chapters and many photos and maps. It is a collection of author's papers published in various learned and technical journals. The whole work of a specialised scholar, as a whole, and in one place, to read it in continueo, is important. It is a detailed account written from an intimate acquaintance with the Himalaya. This book brings together a bundle of facts but it has many repetitions that irritates a critical reader. The chapters of the book are as follows : Location, Extent and Relation, Geology and Structure, Physiography and Landforms, Glaciers and Glacial Geomorphology, Lacustrine Basins, Terrain Evaluation, Enviornmental Control on Land-use, Development of Transportation, The People and their Varieties, Village Location, Urban Location, The Semi Nomad, The Siwalik Belt in Kashmir, Morpho-Ecology in Pir-Panjal, Vale of Kashmir, The Northern Valleys of Kashmir, Trans-Himalayan Kashmir, Upper Yamuna Valley, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Darjeeling Hinalaya. Taken on the whole one is impressed by the book and the general results of the book under review will be found quite satisfactory.

Dr. B. N. Shastri



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VOLUME X NUMBER 6

MUSIC OF INDIA : V

PURNIMA SINHA

LIGHT CLASSICAL MUSIC

It is difficult to draw a sharp line of demarcation between classical and light classical forms. In fact there is no indegenous term corresponding to light classical in the musical terminology. But some classes of songs can neither be classed as classical (*Marga*), nor as folk (*Loke Sangeet*) and can thus be grouped as 'light classical' songs. In general, the classical forms concentrate more on unfolding of the inherent expression of the melody, but as we move towards the light classical and folk songs, the melody beings to act as an agent for the expression of word themes, through association with some typical melodic motifs, based on one or other *Raga*. The melodic theme is not usually developed into *Bistar* and *Tan*, but the word theme is generally elaborate and improvisation on words is often done to explain the meaning more clearly.

The more important forms which may be grouped as light classical are *Gazal*, *Bhajan* and *Kirtan*. I shall discuss only of Kirtan developed in Bengal. Kirtan in other parts of India have less elaborate structure. *Kheyal* is distinctly different from the above mentioned forms, but it is difficult to precisely determine the distinction between classical *Thumri* and these lighter forms. Through association with particular word themes certain melodic motifs and cadences attain distinctive meanings characterising different forms. Both *Kirtan* and *Thumri* can be set in *Khambaj* Raga using the same set of notes. But some typical melodic motifs distinguish *Thumri* from *Kirtan*. The most important difference between the two forms, however, is that while *Thumri* deals with a poetry of two or four lines which may only suggest a mood, there are

long stories behind the *Kirtan* themes. To appreciate *Kirtan*, those stories and traditional symbols have to be known. I myself do not appreciate the full flavour of *Gazal*, which is composed in Persian or in Urdu and needs a good knowledge of poetry in those languages. It is also a little difficult for me to understand every word of Hindi Bhajans. But the atmosphere of Bengal is so much saturated with *Kirtan* that every Bangalee is tuned to the moods of *Kirtan* and cannot help having some knowledge about *Kirtan*. Kirtan of Bengal has therefore been death with in some detail in this paper in comparison with the other light classical musical forms, of North India like *Gazal* and *Bhajan*.

Gazal : Gazal literally means talking to women, and deals mainly with love themes. It is of Persian origin in all its aspects. The themes are usually associated with the various incentives of love like spring, youth and wine and also the obstacles of love, such social barriers and the difficulty of approaching the lover. The most important themes are about the emotion of pain of separation from the lover, but there are also specific religious and prilosophic themes. *Gazal* is composed of five to thirteen couplets which are independent. The couplets rhyme according the to the following structure :

A———A
B———A
C———A

Same melodic theme is applied to all the couplets for a particular *Gazal* composition. The second part of the couplet is generally sung with a quicker tempo.

Translation of word themes of some typical *Gazals* based on *Ragas* like *Bilawal* and *Piloo* are given below :

(1) I am very anxious to get my beloved
But love needs patience.
By the time you would care for me
My bleeding heart may stop.
This life is like a spark
The life is full of sorrow
Death is the only remedy
Yet the candle has to burn throughout the night.

(2) She is in love and laments
For being in love
The pain of love is overbearing
Yet the feeling is wonderful

* Translated from the original Urdu by M. H. K. Querishi of the University of Chicago.

Typical melodic motifs characteristic of *Gazal* are represented in record numers 1 & 2. (See reference).

Bhajan: Hindi *Bhajans* are based on the compositions of such exponents of the *Bhakti* cult as Meera, Surdas, Tulsidas and Kabir around the 14th to 16th centuries. These are devotional songs mostly addressed to Ram and Krishna, but in Kabir's compositions themes are mainly on general ethical principles emphasizing equality of mankind. The melodic structure is simple and the word theme is elaborate. Melodic themes are based on light *Ragas* like *Piloo*, *Khambaj* and *Bhairavi*. Analysis of melodic structure of light classical music has not been dealt with in detail because they are based essentially on classical *ragas*, in which *Bistar* and *Tan* is curtailed to a minimum. Emotional appeal of the word themes is the predominant feature. The nature of word themes of typical *Bhajans* are as follows:

(1) Lord Krishna tries to prove to his mother that he has not stolen butter and was not involved in the mischievous activities for which his mother has scoleded him.[3]

(2) Meera, the princess tells are husband that she wants to leave her home and longs to live in the house of Krishna. She would wear any clothing and eat any food that Krishnt would give her; she woul sit wherever Krishna would ask her to sit. If He wants to sell her away, she would accept even that. She wants to say over and over again that Krishna is her life's partner.

The typical melodic motifs characteristic of *Bhajans* would become apparent through listening to records or some eminent singers[3, 4, 5, 6].

Kirtan: Though devotional songs in some parts of North India and also in South India are called *Kirtan*. *Kirtan* in Bengal has a special melodic and rhythmic character, which is different from *Kirtan* or *Bhajan* of rest of India. In the original *Kirtan* froms there are many complex rhythmic patterns which are not used in classical Hindusthani music. The conventional *Ragas* have also in some cases been modified in *Kirtan*. The word themes of *Kirtan* convey a slightly different flavour than that of Hindi *Bhajan;* the love for God being more sensuous in Bengali *Kirtan*.

Kirtan in Bengal has been developed through contributions from different poets in the form of *Vaishnava Padabali* - starting from Jaidev. Though *Jaidev Padabali* was composed in Sanskrit in the 12th century, his work had profound influence on the later Bengali poets who wrote and composed songs about the love of Radha and Krishna. Among these poets Chandidas and Vidyapati (14th and 15th centuries) are most important. All these poets indicated the *Ragas* and *Talas* in which their songs were to be sung, but the actual style of singing prevalent during their time cannot be ascertained. The present form of Bengali *Kirtan* was

developed by the disciples of Chaitanya, especially Narottam Das, who was well trained in classical music in Brindabad. The style of *Kirtan* by Narottam Das is called *Garanhati*, perhaps after the region to which he belonged. A section of the disciples of Narottam Das developed a style called *Manoharshahi*, which was mixed with local folk tunes. Another style developed near Burdwan is called *Reneti*. *Garanhati* and *Manoharshahi* styles were practiced by expert musicians. Like classical music, there were rigourous training centres for *Kirtan* at the *Ashrams* or *Vaishnava Gurus*, where students used to learn both techniques of music and other *Shastras*. Later, these training centres disintegrated and gradually *Kirtan* became more simple. At present the most popular style of *Kirtan* is called *Dhap Kirtan*, in which very simple *Talas* like *Dadra* and *Kaharva* are used.

There are different forms of Kirtan—*Nam Kirtan* and *Leela Kirtan*. In *Nam Kirtan* the name of Krishna is only repeated by a gathering of people with simple melody and rhythm, or the people may go in procession around the streets of villages and cities with *Khol* (a form of drum) and *Kartal* (cymbal) singing *Nam Kirtan*. In *Leela Kirtan* different phases and different aspects of Krishna's life story, especially the love story of Radha and Krishna, are depicted.

Any form of *Kirtan* starts with *Gaurachandrika*, or taking the name of *Gauranga* or *Chaitanya*. After *Gaurachandrika*, *Khol* and *Kartal* players play rhythmic patterns and then the main vocalist or *Adhikari* starts singing and the other singers repeat parts of the song. The *Adhikari* may first tell the story and then sing. During the performance the *Adhikari* improvises on the spot on the word themes of the original song (which may be compositions of great poets like Chandidas or Vidyapati) by proper rhyming and matching. This elaboration is the most interesting characteristic of *Kirtan*. A good *Adhikari* must always have a good sense of poetry.

Before giving examples of *Kirtan* songs I shall say something about the story of Radha Krishna and some typical symbols: There are different attitudes of worshipping Krishna associated with *Kirtan* themes. *Dashya* (as a servant), *Sakhya* (as a friend), *Batsalya* (as a morther) and *Madhur* (as a lover). God as a lover combines all the flabour most effectively.

There may be different types of love—(1)*Sadharani*, (2) *Samanjasa*., (3) *Samartha*. The first type is the ordinary craving for the fulfilment of desire aroused by seeing Krishna. The hunchbacked woman Kubja is an example of this type of lover. The second kind wishes to fulfil the desire for union with Krishna through legal marriage. Rukmini and Satyabhama are examples of this kind. The third kind of lover attains complete identification with Krishna and is dedicated completely to the

well-being of Krishna. The *Gopinis* of Brindaban, Chandrabali and Radha are examples of this kind. Radha is the greatest exponent of this form of love and Chandrabali, the coheroine is very near to the level of Radha.

Radha is a married woman. She has too many social barriers to cross in order to reach Krishna. These barriers represent the attachment for material benefits which stands in the way of spirtual pursuit. The love of Radha is the highest form because she defies her prestige and social position for Krishna.

The Radha Krishna love theme depicted in *Kirtan* is divided into the following parts :

I. *Purbaraga*—The beginning of love and the first symptoms
II. *Man*—Love play and mock quarrel
III. *Biraha*—Departure of Krishna to Mathura and the lamentation of Radha in pain of separation
IV. *Mathur*—The role of the messenger of Radha to Krishna at Mathura
V. *Milan*—Reunion

Some of the names of Krishna and Radha and the symbols associated with them are given below :

Krishna– Madhav, Kanu, Kanai, Hari, Shyam.
Krishna's complexion is blue or black, dressed in yellow cloth and peacock feather as crown. He plays the flute in a crooked posture.

Radha– Rai, Srimati

Radha has a golden complexion, dressed in a blue skirt.
Chandan—Sandalwood paste used to decorate the body
Til and *Tulsi* -oil seeds and sacred basil leaves used for ritual purposes.

Krishna is first introduced as a mischievous sweet child who has won the heart of all. He grows up as a cowherd boy and performs many miracles. He is perpetually a combination of an ordinary human being and a godhead. Quite early in his youth he becomes notorious as a lover of milkmaids of Brindaban. Nobody can resist his wholesome charm and especially the tune of his flute. Radha who is already married to Ayan Ghosh becomes the centre of his love. In Hindu mythology Radha is considered as a incarnation of Lakshmi—the consort of Vishnu, whose incarnation is Krishna. Most of the *Kirtans* refer to the various phases of spiritual love of Radha and Krishna. The following songs are selected from the important phases of Radha-Krishna love story :

Translation of the songs :

I. *Purbarag*

(1) I have just seen him
It is too much beauty for my eyes to see
All at once in one person.
My heart is filled with that vision
My eyes are filled with that vision
I have filled my heart with that beauty

That dark body is smeared with *Chandan*
It is not possible for me to maintain my
social status any more
I have lost all prestige and position
There is fire in his beauty
I have dedicated my heart to the infinite beauty
He has dressed his hair with fresh flowers
and peacock feathers
My whole self becomes sweet and sweeter
My heart in craving for my partner becomes sweeter and sweeter.[8]
(2) Even at so young an age

I have been overhealmed by the charm of Shyama
I do not know what will happen to me
I do not know what awaits me in future
If Shyama does not care for me anymore
What is the use of taking the name of Hari over and over ?

Yet, if I close my eyes, I see
the image of Govinda in my heart
When I open my eyes I see Shyama again
If I walk in the streets Shyama is
always along with me
My feet touching his feet at every step
I have dedicated my heart to his feet
with *Til* and *Tulsi*

II *Man*

(3) Why did you quarrel with such a witty lover ?
Why did you quarrel, O pretty lady
How could you quarrel with a charmer like him ?
He is the king of lovers, not an ordinary lover.
You failed to retain the great love.
Where did you learn such hard dealings ?
Your over sensitive pride made you lose your Madhav
People are laughing at you.
Your rivals are laughing at you
If Chandrabli knew
She would clap her hands with joy

How can a housewife grow a secret love
with so much obstinacy and sensitivity ?
The love of Krishna is divine
How can it stand any duplicity ?
I am tired of imploring you and your beloved
over and over again to be sensible.
But I have to watch your endless playful quarrel
I warned you before, and you did not listen
What can I do if you weep now ?
What is left for her in life
Who has forsaken the precious Krishna ?
Her life is without any meaning, so says Chandidas.[9]

When Krishna returned to Radha after spending the night with other women, she said :

(4) Don's you dare come near me my dear !
Do not touch me !
Take a mirror and look at your face
There are prints of lips tinted with
betel leaves all over your cheeks
Your eyes are dreamy with sweet memory ![10]

When Krishna is about to leave for Mathura one of Radha's *Sakhi* (close companion) sings :

The following songs is a good example of rhythmic and tempo variation, which is a common characteristic feature of *Kirtan.* The starting theme is in *Jhaptal* (2/3/2/3) The *Tala* changes in the successive passages in the following sequence :

Dadra (3/3)
Kaharva (2/2/2/2)
Dadra
Kaharva

(5) Don't go away now Shyama
Leaving our desires unfulfilled.
Rai has smeared her golden body with ashes
And is crying incessantly in her bed
She is crying on and on for him, who makes her cry
What is her fault ? Why are you leaving her ?
She could not speak out in words the feeling of her heart
Don't go away without listening to it.
Even if your pride is hurt
Feel the unspoken words in her tears
before leaving her,
We women cannot speak out
We deceive ourselves
We cannot speak out even if we die.

Why have you kindled fire in her heart ?
Can the fire in her heart be extinguished by tears
Don't cry near the river Jamuna, it will overflow.[1]

III *Biraha*

(6) Don't try to console me in vain
Lalita * my friend
How could you ask me to forget my Krishna ?
I know no joy without that moon of Nandapur
I can't live for a moment without seeing him.
Tell me where he is ! Where is my life's partner ?
I cannot smile any more
I am getting blind with tears
But this is the mission of my life
I wish the whole world would cry like me
You have to cry like Radha
Some day all the people of the world
would cry for Krishna throughout their whole lives.
But if one would get him just by crying
I would have got him
You cannot get him by trying
Then Jashomati ** wouldn't have lost him
He has an eternal craving for love
You cannot have him without love.[1]

Radha cannot bear the pain of separation any more—she is on the verge of death, yet she does not want to be possessive but longs for the welfare of Krishna. Radha sings :

(7) If he is happy in Mathura
Don't ask him to come back
Even if I die in pain of separation
That would be a happy end of me.

Radha considers her body to be sacred since it was touched by Krishna. She says :

(8) Don't burn this body of Radha after death
(the body that is blessed with Krishna's touch)
don't throw it in the water
But keep it on the *Tamal* tree
(the tree that is dark like Krishna)

(9) I am sure to die
But who will take care of my precious Kanu ?

---

* One of Radha's *Sakhis* (close girl friends).
** Krishna's mother.

IV *Mathur*

Brinda sings to Krishna :

(10) Shyame on You, O king !
I am ashamed to see your gorgeous head dress.
How could you decorate it in such a way ?
The head that was dedicated to Radha ?
The head that was sold to Radha's feet ?
Your golden goddess is rolling in the dust
And Kubja is sitting on your bed.
Is it a proper place for Kubja ?
The crooked one has joined with another crooked person
It is a good match !
You are crooked and Kubja is also crooked.

I may now refer to an authentic long playing record of *Kirtan* edited by Alan Danielou. The word themes and the style of song brings into relief all the features of a typical *Kirtan* performance in a village of Bengal. The theme deals with a section of *Mathur* phase of the Radha-Krishna love story.

The record starts with *Gaurachandrika* followed by playing of rhythmic pattern on *Khol* and *Kartal*.

Then the Adhikari starts singing :

(11) Brinda* is on her way to Mathura from Brindaban. My Govinda is sitting on the throne as a king. She went to the king's court and stated :

"O king ! A bird has been stolen from us."

The king said "What kind of bird is it ?"
Brinda said "Seeing a beautiful black parrot

We caught it in the trap of our eyes
We kept it with care in the cage of our hearts
Tying it with the chain of our mind.

The king said "Very well, what did you feed it with ?"
Brinda said "We used to feed him with nectar every day

And took good care of him
Taught him to talk
When we clapped our hands
And asked him to talk
He would call Sree Radha's name"

* Radha's Sakhi as a messenger to Krishna.

The king said "Very well, then what happened ?"
Brinda said "Then the ungrateful bird broke his chain

and came to Mathura."

The king said "You mean here in the city of Mathura ?

Why don't you search for him ?
I assure you the case will be properly judged

Brinda said "I have already searched and found that

Kubja has kept him with her
So Sreemati has sent me to pray
for getting back her own treasure
Brahman Chandidas pleads to you
Tell me whether she can get him back
Give the verdict, O king, whether she
will get back the bird of her life.
Tell me whether the owner should
get her bird back.
We seek your judgment
Give the verdict !

The last part of the song is repeated in chorus over and over, which creates a hypnotic effect on the audience. The performers are also in a trance.

V. The last phase is the *Milan* or reunion. The following songs describes the reunion :

(12) You have come back after such a long time
If I have died I wouldn't have seen you
My heart has survived only because
It is the heart of a helpless woman.
It would have cracked if it were a stone
Tell me whether all was well with you
The days of the sorrowing girl passed in sorrow
I don't care for my sorrow
I am happy if you are happy
Tell me if everything was well with you O king !

REFERENCES

Gazal	*Records*
(1) Begum Akhtar	: J N G 1145
(2) Begum Akhtar	: J N G 1215

	Bhajan	*Records*
(3)	Pt. Onkar Nath Thakur	B E X 272
(4)	Himangsu Dutta (Sursagar)	P 11797
(5)	Miss Gohar (Bijapur)	G E 1678
(6)	Pt. D. V. Paluskar	G E 3868
(7)	Sm. Hirabai Barodekar	V E 5030
	Kirtan	
(8)	Chhabi Bannerjee	P 11929
(9)	Chhabi Banerjee	N 82604
(10)	K. C. Dey	H T 2
(11)	Chhabi Bannerjee	G E 24870

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Dipak Mohan Sen

A SIDELIGHT ON THE CASTE-STRUCTURE OF MEDIAEVAL BENGAL

The first literary traces of the caste system are to be found in the Rig-Veda, where three groups are mentioned : Brahmana (Priests), *Kshata* (Rulers), Vish (common people). The initial distinction of people into two *varnas*, later developed into above three and finally into four as mentioned under. Then it is fitted into the framework as detailed by the contributor of the present article.

The origin of caste system in India is intimately connected with the belief that the Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras had been created from the mouth, the arms, the thighs and the feet respectively of the Creator. The passage in which this idea gains ground is the Purusa Sukta (90.12) of the tenth Mandala of the Rigveda, though the implications are quite vague. According to Manu, many castes or *Jatis* were produced by a series of crosses first between members of the four *Varnas* and then between the discendants of these initial unions. The racial origin of the caste is based on the term "Varna" meaning colour used to specify the orders in society. The word "Jati" etymologically means "something into which one is born" and is used in the sense of a caste. Curiosly enough, unlike other parts of India, the four-fold *Varna* division had nothing to do with the caste structure of Bengal as Kshatriyas and Vaisyas rarely formed any homogeneity in this part of India, where with the exclusion of the Brahmanas, all other castes were classed as Sudras.

Let us discuss the factors which contributed to the growth and development of the caste organisation of Bengal during the period under review. Precisely, two elements in the population of Bengal can be broadly distinguished—one consisting of the primitive non-Aryan tribes like the Kols, Sabaras, Pulindas, Hadi, Dom, Chandala etc. who are designated as the "Mlechchas" ; and the other consisting of the higher classes of people presumably Aryan in origin which come within the frame-work of caste system. The former groups are representatives of the earliest inhabitants of Bengal, and the majority, of them were probably descended from the non-Aryan people of the Rigvedic age, referred to as Nishadas in Vedic literature. It is

considered by many scholars that the Nishadas with a neolethic culture, formed "the substratum of the population of Bengal."

Of the 14 (Fourteen) castes of Bengal measured by Risely the Cephalic indices ranged from 74.9 to 78.8, the lower castes like the Bauri, Mal Paharia, Bagdi, Goala, Mal Kaibarta and Muchi having the lower indices and Sadgop, Chandala of the lower castes and Kayastha and Brahmin of the high ones having the higher ones. Only the Rajbanshi Maghs of the Chittagong Hills show a Cephalic index of over 77; and they are essentially Mongoloid. The Nasal indices of the above 14 castes ranged between 70.7 to 94.7. The lower indices are shown in the ascending order by Kayastha Brahmin, Sadgop and Chandala etc. The Bagdi has the nasal indices of 80.8 and the Bauri, the Mal Paharia and the Mal following in the ascending order. In three lower castes of Bengal—the Pod, the Bagdi, and the Chandala—the figures are 111.5, 112.2 and 114.0 respectively.

According to Anthropometric tests, the Brahmanas of Bengal "are more closely related to their non-Brahman "neighbours than to the Brahmanas of Midland" (R. P. Chanda, "Indo-Aryan Races", p. 162). Anthropologists generally agree that the Bengalees "originally came of an ethnic stock that was different from the stock from which the Vedic Aryans originated." The gradual stages in the progress of the Aryanisation of Bengal are unknown to us. It must have required many years, perhaps centuries, before the Aryan immigrants from Midland and the people of Bengal could be fused together in a rigid frame-work of Aryan society. It is a well-known fact that the division of the people into four *Varnas* viz. Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras, was merely a theory. By the time Bengal adopted the Aryan culture numerous castes and sub-castes had been evolved. The longest list, is given by Vaijayanti which makes a total of 64 Jatis consisting of sons of the 4 Varnas, the 12 *anuloma* and *pratiloma* sons and their 48 offshoots. The means and number of the castes and sub-castes varied according to time and localities. The Brihaddharma Purana and Brahmavaivarta Purana are composed after 12th century A.D. The Brahmavaivarta Purana divides the non-Brahmana population into 36 castes (the conventional number of castes even to-day), all described as Sudras. The Brihaddharma Purana classified the unions as *Uttama, Madhyama* and *Adhama Sankaras* all having the status of Sudra.

1. *Uttama* (High) *Sankaras* or class I

(i) *The Karanas*—good scribes, efficient in office-work. (ii) *The*

Ambasthas—asked to study Ayurveda and practise as physicians, and called Vaidyas, (though the Ambasthas cannot be equated with the Vaidyas). (iii) *The ugras*—to practise military arts. (iv) *Magadha*—carrier of messages. (v) *Tantuvaya*—Weaver. (vi) *Gandhika-Vanika*—Dealer in spices, and incense. (vii) *Napita*—Barber. (viii) *Gopa*—milkman. (ix) *Karakara*—blacksmith. (x) *Tulika*—dealer in betelnut. (xi) *Kumbhakara*—potter. (xii) *Kamsakara*—worker in brass. (xiii) *Samkhika* (Samkhakara)—Conch-shell dealer. (xiv) *Dasa*—cultivator. (xv) *Varajivi*—betel-vine growers. (xvi) *Modak*—Sweet-meat maker (xvii) *Malakara*—flowerist. (xviii) *Suta*—bard. (xix) *Rajaputra* (Rajputs) (xx) *Tambuli*—Betel-leaf dealers.

2. *Madhyama* (Intermediate) *Sankaras* or class II

(i) *Taksham*—Carpenter. (ii) *Rajaka*—Washerman. (iii) *Svarnakara*—Goldsmith. (iv) *Svarna-vanik*—trader in bullion. (v) *Abhira*—Cowhered. (vi) *Tailakaraka*—Oilman. (vii) *Dhvivara*—fisherman (viii) *Saundika*—Vinter (ix) *Nata*—dancer. (x) *Savaka.* (xi) *Sekhara.* (xii) *Jalika.*

3. *Adhama* (Low) or class III

(i) *Malegrahi*—a branch of Mal caste. (ii) *Kudava*—boatman (iii) *Chandala*—Chandal. (iv) *Varuda.* (v) *Taksha*—Carpenter. (vi) *Charmakara*—leather-worker. (vii) *Ghantajivi*—modern Patni caste. (viii) *Dolavahi*—Palanquin-carrier. (ix) *Malla*—modern Malo.

The above division into three classes is said to be based on certain principles viz. (a) those whose father and mother both belong to the four original castes are regarded as Class I. (b) those whose mothers alone belong to one of these original castes but fathers belong to Class-I, form Class-II. (c) those whose father and mother both belong to any mixed caste are relegated to Class-III. These sub-castes were more or less dependent on the rules of endogamy.

The Srotriya Brahmanas were permitted to function as priest only of the twenty mixed castes belonging to Class-I (*Uttama*). The priest of the other castes were regarded as degraded (*Patita*) Brahmanas, who attain the status of the caste they serve. The gradual disappearance of a distinct Kshatriya caste, the progressive assimilation of the Vaisya with the Sudra, and the division of the last into '*Sat*' and '*Asat*' (higher and lower), may be considered as peculiar to Bengal only during the Hindu period.

The list of *Sankara* or mixed castes, given in the Brahmavaivarta

Purana, clearly resembles that of the Brihaddharma Purana, though there are certain differences, in detail. Thus, with functional differentiation in society, there came into being separate occupational groups with more or less distinct interests. The Brahmans had as their monopoly the occupation of a priest. Occupations of the higher castes other than the Brahmanas were progressively encroached upon by other castes. As a matter of course, occupational groups turned into endogamous groups.

Kulinism :

When in Bengal so many castes and sub-castes were rapidly rising in quick succession, the upper castes were also tottering under the threat of *Varna Sankara* or admixture of blood between them and the different strata of caste and social order. A galaxy of reformers tried utmost to maintain the purity of the upper castes and especially of the Brahmanas. The new process of upliftment of the Brahmanas and other higher castes came to be known as Kulinism in Bengal.* There are many mythical or legendary accounts connected with the rise of Kulinism which appear to be, in most cases, fabulous to almost all reasonable men including even orthodox Brahmins of modern times.

There is an extensive literature in Bengal known as *Kulaji* or *Kulasastra*. History of Kulinism is associated with the historicity of king *Adisura* as recorded in *Kulaji* writings. The story goes that, on account of the spread of Buddhism in Bengal, the native Brahmanas became degenerated and forgot the practices of the Vedic rites. There was a king named Adisura in Bengal who intended to perform a Vedic sacrifice for getting a son. But he could not find a suitable Brahamana to act as a priest at such a sacrifice. So he requested the then king of Kanyakubja or Kanauj in Uttar Pradesh to send him five learned Brahmanas for the sacrificial purpose. On the latter's refusal, Adisura sent army against king of Kanauj, defeated him and compelled him to send five Brahmanas to Bengal. These Brahmanas performed the task very successfully and were given money and lands to settle in Bengal about the middle of the 10th century A.D. The names of the five Brahmanas, according to *Radhi* tradition, were (1) Bhattanarayana, Sandilya Gotra (2) Daksa, Kasyapa gotra, (3) Chandada, Vatsya gotra, (4) Sriharsa, Bhardvaja Gotra (5) Vedagarbha, Savarna Gotra. Five

*For more details readers are referred to S. C. Chakravarty's 'A Study of Kulinism in Bengal" *Folklore* Vol. 3. No. 8 and 9, August and September 1962, pp. 366-70 and 393-415.—Ed.

Kayasthas also came with them as servants and their names were (1) Makuranda Ghosha, Saukalina Gotra, (2) Dasarath Vasu, Gautama Gotra, (3) Purusottama Datta, Maudgalya Gotra, (4) Virata Guha, Kasyapa Gotra, (5) Kalidasa Mitra, Visvamitra Gotra.

Bhattanarayana and Daksa had each sixteen sons Sriharsa four, Vedagarbha twelve, Chandada eight, and in this manner, they had altogether fiftysix sons. The fiftysix sons of five Brahmanas were thus assigned fifty six villages. The names of these villages, in course of time, became the surnames of the fiftysix families. Thus, from the name of the village Bandya or Bandyaghati is derived the surnames of Bandya and Upadhyaya or teacher—Bandyopadhyaya, corrupted into Bannerjee. From village Mukhati we get the surname Mukha—Upadhyaya—Mukhopadhaya or Mukherjee. From the village Chatta comes the name Chatta—Upadhya or Chatterjee. The surname Gangopadhyaya or Ganguli comes from the village Gangul, Ghosal from the village Ghosa or Ghosali, Pippali or Piplai from Pippal, Kanjilal from Kanji, Gadgadi from Gadgad, Mahanta from Mahintya, Simlai from Simla, Siddhanta from Siddhal. There are, however, different gains of the Varendra Brahmans—Northern Bengal is known as Varendra Bhumi, while Radha proper comprises the whole of Burdwan Division and Vanga denotes eastern Bengal.

At first all Brahmanas in Bengal were known as *Srotriyas* i.e. versed in Sruti or Vedic learning. About the middle of the 12th century, King Vallalasena introduced new order of merit, called Kulinism, among the Radhi and Varendra Brahmanas, with a view to inspire a higher standard of learning and morals among them. Stories regarding the introduction of Kulinism by Vallalasena as recorded in *Kulaji* writing are more fanciful than real. It is stated that Vallalasena, at first, conferred this honour of Kulinism on 19 *Radhi* persons. The groups of Kulina Siddha Srotriya, Sadhya-Srotriya and Kashta-Srotriya among the Radhi Brahmanas of Bengal were organised by Vallalasena. The rule was that a man of the Kulina class could marry a woman of his own class or of the two higher Srotriya classes; a Sidha-Srotriya could marry in his own group or in the Sadhya group; but the Sadhya and Kashtra Srotriyas might take wives only within the limits of their own classes. Conversely, women of the Sadhya Srotriya class could marry in their own class or the two classes above them; Sidhya in their own class or in the Kulina class; while Kulina women at one end and Kashtra at the other were restricted their choice of husbands to the Kulina and Kashtra groups. The degraded Kulinas formed what is called the Vamsaja order. If any Kulina entered into matrimonial relation through either son or daughter with a Vamsaja.

While the three classes of the Radhi Brahmanas were known as Kulina, Vamsaja and Srotriya, the corresponding classes among the Varendras were Kulina, Kapa and Moulika. After the fall of Sena power and the establishment of Muslim rule, Kulinism was no longer based on the grounds of merit but became hereditary in the families, there being none to determine as to who should remain as Kulina or not. In the 15th. or 16th. centuries there appeared a reformer named Devivara Ghatak who called an assembly of the leading Pandits and with their consent, he followed a middle course in the matter of retention or expulsion of guilty persons. Those whose offences were not so serious, were retain in the Kulina order, and organised into 36 new groups called Melas. "The greatest concern among the Kulinas was not the question of earning bread, or doing any public service, or looking after the interests of the country and of the Hindu community against the tyrannical policy of the Muslim rulers, but the question how to marry their sons and daughters and with whom to sit at dinner so as to maintain the so-called purity of their families" (N. K. Dutta, "Origin and growth of caste in India", Vol-II, p-12). The *Radhis* and the *Varendras,* who form the bulk of the Brahmana population of Bengal, claim that their fore-fathers, five in number, came from Kanuaj at the invitation of King Adisura and that they are naturally direct descendants of those five Brahmanas. This tradition is the main foundation upon which the whole structure of social organisation of the Radhi and Varendra Brahmanas rests. If this tradition of the Kulajis is proved baseless, the whole structure of social organisation will, at once, topple down. According to Kulaji writings, the five Brahmanas of Kanauj were accompanied by five Kayasthas, as servants or body-guards. According to Dharmasastras, the Kayasthas acted as administrative officers, revenue collectors and clerks. The argument in favour of the coming of the Kayasthas is groundless. Again the Radhi and the Varendra Brahmanas, at the present time, count 35 to 37 generations from the five Brahmanas from Kanauj, while the Kayasthas count only 25 to 27 generations from their five fore-fathers who had come from Kanauj. How can there be this difference of ten generations if all of them had come at the same time? "Unlike proficient Brahmanas, competent Kayasthas were not in dearth in Bengal and the bringing over of Kayasthas from Kanauj to Bengal was like carrying coal to Newcastle" (N. K. Dutta "Origin and growth of caste in India" Vol-II. p-20).

It has been argued by some that the whole tradition bears a close similarity with similar traditions which were prevailed in South India and these traditions, someway or other, were borrowed into

Bengal. The head form and nasal shape are more similar between the Brahmanas of Bengal and U. P. Hence, the Anthropometric tests are also definitely against the view that the Brahmanas or Kayasthas of Bengal are descended from those of Kanyakubja. Prior to the coming of the traditional five Brahmanas from Kanuaj, the *saptasatis* enjoyed honour from the rulers and received gains. Their *gotras* are similar to those of the *Radhis* and *Varendras*. From the accounts of Nulo Panchanana, it is known that many *Saptasatis* became priests to lower castes and descended to the rank of degraded Brahmanas though with the honourable surnames of Chakravarty and Bhattacharya. The *Sakadvipas* or *Magas* (Magi, ancient Persia, Sun worshippers according to Purana) are another group of Brahmanas, looked down upon by the ordinary Brarhmanas because of their acceptance of gift at funeral rites. Their *gotras* are also similar to those of other Brahmanas. They are known as *grahacharya* i.e. astrologers, star-readers, fortune-tellers and healers of diseases. These Brahmanas use Acharya, Upadhayaya, Misra, Dikshit, Chakravarty, Bhattacharyay etc. as their surnames.

Kayastha :

Next to the Brahmanas, the Karanas appear to have been amost important caste in ancient Bengal. It is worthy of note that the Karana caste, whose members performed the same vocations as the Kayasthas, gradually disappeared in Bengal after the close of Hindu period.

The "Kayastha" is mentioned as a royal official in the Visnu and Yajnavalka Smritis. The Rajatarangini refers to the Brahmana Sivartha as a Kayastha in the 12th century A.D.

It is evident, however, from a record of Amoghavarsa that there was a Kayastha caste in western India as early as the 9th century A.D. The existence of Kayastha as a caste in northern India is also indicated by references to "Gauda Kayastha Vamsa". Several inscriptions indicate that a Kayastha race descended from *Vastu* and hence called Vastavya Kayastha who lived near Kalanjar on or before the 11th century A.D.

Mythical accounts of the origin of the Kayastha are supplied by some early records. We are told that a great sage named Kachara, born of Siva, gave a boon to his Sudra servant that he would have a son of well-known righteous deeds whose caste would, therefore, be known by the name Kayastha. According to this account, the Kayastha would seem to be of Sudra origin. The Ajaygarh inscription

of Nana, a minister of the Chandella King Bhojavarman, traces the origin of the Kayastha to the sage Kasyapa.

According to the Kulajis, the Kayasthas of Bengal, at least the upper classes, are descended from the five attendents of the five Brahmanas who were brought by Adisura. This belief is still more improbable. According to Dr. Bhandarkar and others, Kayasthas were descended from Nagara Brahmanas who had a large settlement in Bengal long before the 8th century A.D. The origin of Kulinism among the Kayasthas is difficult to determine. At first, they must have a very limited number, as in the case of the Radhi or Varendra Brahmanas. But, after the downfall of the Sena kingdom, there was little restriction upon all those who bore the surnames of the original Kulina families claiming Kulinism for themselves. But the Kayasthas of Varendra and northern Radha could not be influenced by the Senas and so the Kulinism of the Senas is not to be found among them.

Vaidya :

The word "Vaidya" in early Sanskrit literature denoted a learned man well-versed in Vedic learning. The word as used in the Asvalayana Grihya Sutra (IV, 9), may be taken to mean a learned person. The sage Vaisistha is referred to as a Vaidya in the Ramayana (Ayodhyakanda, 77). Again, the Vaidya is mentioned as the most honourable among the Brahmanas (Dvijesu Vaidyah Sreyamsah) in Mahabharata, (Udyogaparva, ch. VI. 2). According to Charaka Samhita, the physicians are regarded *trija* or thrice-born not for their superiority among the twice born but because after their ordinary initiation as twice-born, they are again initiated into the mysteries of the Science of Medicine. According to this supposition, the Vaidyas were a class of super-Brahmanas. In Rigvedic times, physicians were the most respectable members of society. By the time of the Dharm-sastras, a great change set in. Even in Vasistha's law book (before 300 B.C.) a Brahmana who practised the profession of a physician was regarded as a degraded one (III, 3).

It is difficult to say when this professional group was developed into a caste. Even now a Vaidya caste, as we find it in Bengal, cannot be found out in upper India. There is no reference to Vaidya as a caste in Bengal before the 12th century A.D. The *Kulajis* refer to Adisura both as Ambastha and Vaidya and also regard Sena Kings as Vaidyas. But the texts in which these views are expressed can hardly claim much historical value. The Brihaddharma Purana, treats the terms Vaidya and Ambastha as synonymous (uttara XIV, 41) and directs the

Vaidyas to observe the duties of a Sudra (Sudradharman—Uttara. XIV. 44). Attempts were made by a section of Brahmana legislators to reduce the status of the Vaidyas and make them Sudras on the plea that in the Kali age, there would be only two Varnas, Brahmana and Sudra. The Vaidya genealogist Bharata Mallika in the 17th century and the Vaidya leader Raja Rajballava in the 18th century claimed themselves as Ambasthas and practised their rites and usages. But in places like Srikhanda in Burdwan district and Senbhum in Manbhum district, the Vaidyas continued to practise the usages of Brahmanas in as much as the right of wearing sacred thread was not given up. In a bid to regain their lost status and to revive caste consciousness, most of the Vaidyas now-a-days, contend that, if there were only two Varnas in the Kali age (i.e. Brahmana and Sudra), the Vaidyas, with their right of studying and teaching, are more akin to the Brahmanas than to the Sudras.

Navasakha or Navasakyas :

With the rise of new occupations, some new trading and artisan castes in Bengal came into prominence under the name of Navashakha or Navasakya. Navasakha primarily denoted nine branches or ,sub-divisions, but subsequent promotions from lower orders increased the number to fourteen. This nine-fold division (with the number increasing to fourteen) comprised of :—

(i) *Tili*—dealer in sesame seed ; (ii) *Mali*—gardener ; (iii) *Tambuli* —dealer in betel-leaf ; (iv) *Gopa* together with *Sadgopa*—pursuing agricultural avocations (v) *Napit*—barber along with *Madhunapit*—Sweetseller ; (vi) *Gochali* or *Barai*—betel leaf planter ; (vii) *Kamar*—blacksmith ; (viii) *Kumar*—Potter ; (ix) *Puntuli* comprising five castes of spice dealer ; (x) *Gandhabanik*—Spice-dealer ; (xi) *Tanti*—Weaver (xii) *Sankha Banik*—Conchsell-worker ; (xiii) *Kamsyabanik*—brass mental-worker and (xiv) *Kuri-Moira*—dealer and seller of sweets.

In course of time, the Sunarnabanik and the Saha were ranked low, conferred to a lower position and naturally excluded from the list while the Napit was included in, though he was not treated as a "Good Sudra" in upper India. Members of the Saha or Sahoo caste were found in mercantile, agricultural and other pursuits. There are many families belonging to the Saha caste who use the surnames of Pramanik, Poddar, Das etc. Like the Subarnabaniks of West Bengal, the Sahas of East Bengal with all their wealth, dignity and influence and inspite of their orthodox mode of living, were assigned a lower rank in the order of society.

Kaivartas :

According to *Kulaji* records the *Chasi* or *Halika Kaivartas* came from Dravida. The Kaivarta is referred to in Manu as an alternative name current in Aryavarta or Margava as Dasa who is born of a Nishada father and an Ayogava mother and subsists by working as a boatman. The Jatakas refer to the fisherman as Kaivartas. According to the Brahmavaivarta Purana, Kaivarta is born of Kshatriya father and Vaisya mother. According to ancient Smritis the offspring of a Kshatriya father and Vaisya mother is knows as Mahisya whose origin is considered, thus, identical with that of Kaivarta. The Mahisyas of East Bengal, also known as Halika Dasa and Parasara Dasa are now regarded to be the same as Chasi-Kaivartas of Midnapore and other districts of West Bengal. There are many Zamindars and substantial land-holders among them and in Midnapore district they may be regarded as local aristocracy. The *Dhibaras* and fishermen in East Bengal are known as Kaivartas. According to Amarakosa, the Kaivartas include both Dasa and Dhibara. This added to the evidences of the Brahmavaivarta Purana. Manu and the Jatakas, indicate that the Kaivartas were from ancient times divided into two sections, the cultivator and fisherman. The tradition recorded in the Vallalacharita is that Vallalasena improved the Status of the Kaivartas and made them a clean caste so that they might serve (as minials to) the upper castes . The revolt in northern Bengal during the reign of Mahipala II and the rule of Divya and his two successor indicate the importance of the Kaivarta caste to which they belonged.

Namasudras :

By this time the Namasudras were promoted from the status of Chandalas to that of second class Sudras as a natural consequence of the improved culture and the mode of living they adopted. They were given a place among the Sudras as is evident from the name-ending of Sudra, though they were ordinarily called Namas. The Namasudras claimed that they were formerly Brahmanas and were degraded by virtue of their learning towards Buddhism. This belief cannot be corroborated either by history or tradition or anthropometry.

The Namasudras of Bengal served as cultivators, fishermen, boat-men, carpenters etc. The Namasudras were descended from the Chandalas whom the Jatakas and Dharmasastras describe as a despised outcaste people whose contact must be avoided by the upper class fellows. Being oppressed by the upper castes and disgusted with

hatred and contempt, members of this lower class were constantly breathing an air of dispair. Many of them were eagerly waiting for the opportunity when they would be freed from their miserable position in Hindu Society. When Islam preached the doctrine of equality between man and man and invited the down-trodden people to embrace the new faith as their shelter thousands of these people became converts to this new religion. Dr. N. K. Dutta and others believe that no application of force was necessary for the spread of Islam in Bengal. It has been argued that the neighbourhood of Muslim headquarters like, Delhi, Agra, Lucknow, Patna, Hyderabad had far less converts to Islamic faith than those in remote Sourth-east Bengal where the penetration of Muslim arms was very slight and where there was a preponderence of the Chandalas and other despised castes.

After a brief analysis of Hindu social structure, we should, for a moment, cast our glance at the Muslim population during our period of survey.

A question may be raised—whether the whole of Muslim community constitute a single caste ? Besides, the board Shia and Sunni divisions, the Muslims had innumerable subdivisions of class or order (as many as 80 in number ?) in society (Yakub Ali "Musalmaner Jatibhed"—annexure). It is not true that all these classes and orders could be found in Bengal alone and that too in mediaeval times. It seems that the converts to this new faith were, first of all, assigned a lower rank or order from which they could be promoted to the highest order within a short time by dint of their merit and attainments. Conversely, a man of the highest order can be degraded even to the lowerest rank by virtue of his vices. Thus, there was promotion or relegation from one class to another within the Muslim community. This system of caste was a pathetic contrast to the Hindu religion where under no circumstances can a Brahman become a Chandala and *vice versa*. A comparative study of the social structure of the two communities will, naturally, strike every mind on the slow progress of Islam in Bengal from 16th century onwards.

The present Muslim population of East Bengal, outnumbered the Hindus. It may be stated that a vast majority of them are the desendents of the converted Namasudras. Certainly, the vast multitude of the Muslim community in East Bengal did not come from outside. That the whole Namasudra community of East Bengal did not adopt the Islamic faith is principally due to the reform movement of Sri Chaitanya in the 16th century. It was he who preached, in contradiction to the Brahmana theory of caste, that "all men were equal

in the eyes of God, that all men could worship God in the same way, and that a good Chandala was dearer to him than a bad Brahmana". He introduced the system of worship with Kirtan or devotional songs in which all men, high and low, could take equal part. This infused a new spirit among the Namasudras and other lower castes who now began to feel a sense of kinship with the rest of the Hindu community. The supporters of this neo-Vaisnava creed were looked down upon by the orthodox Brahmanas, at least, for some time. But, nevertheless, the Vaisnava upheaval saved the Hindu community from the impending disaster of mass conversion into Islam.

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SANKAR SEN GUPTA

BENGALEE WOMEN IN ORAL TRADITION

This is a part of the author's forthcoming book on the Women of Bengal. In one or two more issues of this journal the first chapter of the proposed book may be published.

I

PART ONE

Scope of Study

THE men and women who generally live in Bengal, follow the culture and tradition of Bengal and speak in Bengali are known as the Bengalees. This Bengalee community is one of the very ancient communities of India; and from hoary antiquity to the present day, Bengalees are scattered throughout the length and breadth of the country. It is, therefore obvious, to study Bengalee women, there is need to look at the great Indian womanhood. This is an endeavour to treat the women of Bengal as a part of women of India and an attempt to ascertain their position from the witness of oral traditional materials, ancient texts, matrimonial advertisements and a survey of the working women.

Numerous materials on the women of Bengal had already been collected and published by different sources but in ascertaining the socio-politico-economic position and statuses of the women of Bengal we were suddenly stopped short. Here man, dominated by the snowy peaks of the Himalayas, sheltered by the virgin forests and here Nature was expressed in exburent growth; man frightened by Nature's moods shown sudden conclusions and again reassured the recovery of her usual calmness and grandeur; man, thus subjected to many varying influences, gave a vent to exaggerated feelings. Alike attacted, we lingered long in this study, instead of making merely a superficial investigation of the womenfolk of Bengal. Eventhough, it should be said, it is nothing more than a short outline for a greater work which we intend to do in future.

Needless to mention that wherever necessary, we have made use of the folk words either in the text or in the notes in the form of a proverb, a saying, etc. and we have duty quoted the sources from where we have borrowed them. Wherever there are no such references that have been gathered from our own field work. In describing Bengalee

women under different conditions—mother, wife, daughter, sister, widow, barren, etc. we endeavoured to trace their status in the family life through the aid of folklore of Bengal. Besides, the position of working women, both married and unmarried, have been estimated from a projected research. So the position of the unmarried women of different classes of people have been observed in an accurate study of the matrimonial advertisements that published in the daily newspapers of Calcutta. In describing Bengalee women under different parts of their life and condition we have utilised such materials that are not readily available at hand or that have not yet been properly discussed in a projected way.

II

Subeh Bangala :

Here it is necessary to say a few words about the geographic condition of Bengal. For a study on outline of the place from ancient time to the contemporary period will help us understand the problem of our study. 'Banga', 'Bongal', 'Bangala' and 'Bengalla' etc. are the ancient names of Bengal. 'Banga' as far as we know, is first mentioned in *Aittiriya* and *Aranyak Brahmans*. In the *Dharmasutra* of Bodhayana, 'Banga' is said to be a neighbouring State of Kalinga (Orissa) In the *Mahabharata*, Bhima, the second Pandava, on his way to conquer the world (বিশ্বজয়) arrived 'Banga' by killing the king of Mudgiri (Monghyr, Bihar). He defeated the king of Poundra (Bogra district, East Pakistan) and then entered Tamralipti (Tamulk, Midnapur district) Rarha (Burdwan Division), Kabarta and further. The people of 'Banga', according to the *Mahabharata*, were warriors and fighters. They resisted Bhima effectively. It is said in the *Ramayana* that some of the inhabitants of 'Banga' had matrimonial relations with the royal families of Ayodhya (Uttar Pradesh). These suggest that Bengal is a very ancient land which was placed in eastern India (*purbadesa*) by the Chinese pilgrims.[1] This *Purbadesa* or eastern India originally meant Banga, Anga (Bhagalpur), Kalinga (Orissa) and Kamrup(Assam) or it was suggested by the central India with Assam and the whole of Gangetic Delta of Bengal Presidency together with Sambalpur, Orissa and Ganjam. During the Muslim rule Bengal was known as Subeh Bangala. We will see later

(a) Barua, D. K. *Viharas of Ancient India*, Calcutta, Indian Publications 1960. (b) Chattopadhyaya, Amulya Kumar *Prachin Bangala-o-Bangalir Parichaya*, Loknath Pustakalaya, Howrah. (c) Sen, Probodh, *"Bangalee Jatir Parichaya*, Calcutta. (d) Sircar, D. C. *Studies in the Geography of Ancient and medieval India*, Calcutta.

how the modern Bengal (West Bengal and Eastern Pakistan) got its boundary during the British period by adjustments and readjustments.

'Bangala' 'Bengalla' and 'Bengal':

While describing the origin of the word 'Bangala' Abul Fazal said that it originated from Banga+al=Bangala. But this has been challenged by R. C. Majumdar and others who hold a different and a more logical view of the origin of the word 'Bangala.'[2] In the ancient inscriptions discovered, one finds there the names of 'Banga' and 'Bangal' in one place by which historians have concluded that they were two different regions. But what were their areas in those days have not yet been settled. In the travelogues and other literatures of the Middle Age the watery portion of the east of Calcutta or the Gulfe de Bengalla or Gulf of Bengal was known as "Bangala" or 'Bengalla'. But there are two schools about the existence of the City of Bengalla (ভূ-স্বর্গ or the Paradise of India), a dream-land, a *pro-grando,* as said by foreign travellers. Chittagong was known to them as the gateway of 'Bengalla' and a hoast of writers wrote that this place was bounded by mountains, hills, jungles, rivers and the limitless sea—Gulfe de Bengalla—with alluvial plains. So Darbhanga (meaning *dbar* of Banga), is known as another gate or entrance to Bengalla. Bengalla has been washed away by the rivers Ganga, Padma, Ichhamati and Damador according to those who believe in the existence of the place. The word 'Bongal' can also be found in Bhusukpad's *Charyapada* (10th century) which is known as the Old Bengali. Besides this, in Tirumalay's inscription, in *Amarkosh* of Sarbananda, in *Saduktikarnamrita* of Shridhardas, in the *Gazzal* of Hafiz and in other places one can find the word 'Banga' and the words *Bangalbani, Bongalganga, Bangal-Raga, Bongalghar* (Bungalow) etc. Of course, in some places it was stated that 'Bongal' and 'Bengalla' are synonyms and in others it is said that they are identified as two different places, such as বন্দ্যে বঙ্গে সাম পার্শে বাঙ্গালার আলি (কুলজীগ্রন্থ). The other school believes that there was no existence of the City of Bengalla at all.

We should remember in this connection that there has been a constant research on the location and the existence of the City of Bengalla for the last two hundred years. A great many scholars were confined to trace the origin of the land from the linguistic point of view, studying the word 'Bangala', 'Bongal' and 'Bengalla'. In that some opined that 'Bongaldesh', 'Bongalpradesh', and 'Bengallanagari' were different geographical units and cannot be identified as a single

2. Majumdar, R. C. *Bangladesher Itihash* (In Bengali, History of Bengal, Calcutta, General Printers and "History of Bengal," Vol. 2, Dacca Univ.

unit. Others are of the opinion that there was no existence of *'Bengallanagari'* or the City of Bengalla. Those who believe in the existence of 'Bengalla" think, the city has been washed away by the sea.

However for a detailed study on this point a research-worker or an enthusiastic reader may wish to consult the following books besides what have been mentioned elsewhere. (i) Rennell's Memoir of a Map of Hindoosthan, 1788 : (ii) Rainey's Paper in Mokherjea's Magazine, Ed. S. Mukherjea, 1872 : (iii) Blockman's Paper in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1873 ; (iv) Pal, P. C.'s History of Bengal, (v) Majumdar, R. C's History of Bengal, Dacca Univ. ; *Bangla-Desher Itihash*, In Bengali : (vi) Ray, Niharranjan's *Bangalir Itihash, Adi, Parba,* In Bengali ; (vii) Census Reports of Bengal ; (viii) Burrard, S. G. & Hayden H. H.'s A Sketch of the Geography and Geology of the Himalayan Mountains and Tibet etc. ; (ix) Chandra, R. P.'s Indo-Aryan Races : a Study of the Origin of Indo-Aryan People and Institution ; (x) Dalton's Descriptive Enthnology of Bengal ; (xi) Chatterjee, S. K.'s The Origin and Development of the Bengali Language etc. ; (xii) Grierson's Linguistic Survey of India ; (xiii) Sen, Sukumar's History of Bengali Literature ; (xiv) Bose, N. K.'s Modern Bengal ; (xv) Ghosh, Probodhchandra's *"Bangalee"*, In Bengali ; (xvi) Chattopadhyaya, Amulya Kumar's *"Prachin Bangala o Bangalir parichaya ;* (xvii) Sen, Prabodh's *Bangali Jatir Parichaya ;* (xviii) Hunter's Paper in the Encyclopoedia Britinica, Vol. 3 1875-89 ; (xix) Datta, K. K.'s Bengal Subha, (xx) Bengal Harkura and Indian Gazetteer ; (xxi) Bengal Past and Present ; (xxii) Calcutta Review ; (xxiii) Folklore and others.

Origin of Bengal :

It is, however, accepted that 'Banga',. 'Bongal', 'Bengala' or 'Bengalla' were parts of Bengal but none was equal to the province of United Bengal (West Bengal and Eastern Pakistan). Bengal was constituted merging together with zones like Bonga, Poundra, Rarha, Gourha etc., which according to the estimation of some scholars, were different tribal or communal zones headed by the leaders of the respective communities. In these, people of different castes, thoughts, ideas and culture lived together. In ancient days there lived a tribe who were known as 'Poundra' in Bogra, Dinajpur, Rajsahi, Rangpur etc. places of northern part of United Bengal. These area was known then as *Poundrabardhan.* It is during the Pala-Sena time that these area got the status of a Province. From 10th. century B.C. major portion of *Poundrabardhan* was known as *Borendra* or *Barendri.* According to Sandhyakar Nandi the place in between the Ganges and the river Karataya was known as Barendra when the Muslim historians termed this place as 'Barind', It

is also thought of that in ancient Bengal there lived a type of people who were known as *'Banga'*. The land of this *Banga* tribe was known by their tribal name as Banga, which was bounded by the Bhagirathi in the west, the Padma in the north, the Brahmaputra in the east and the Bay of Bengal in the south. In general the south-eastern part of the United Bengal is believed to be the ancient land of Banga. Rarh or Rarha means the south and western part of Bengal. The Ajay river again divided this area into two part, viz *Uttar* or north *Rarh* and *Dakshin* or south *Rarh*. Another name of *Uttar Rarh* was *Bajja* or *Bajra bhumi*. It is the area which at one time spread northward crossing the Ganges. It is believed that the area of Gaura in its initial stage was in Murshidabad and Birbhum districts then Maldaha and Burdwan added to it. During the reign of Sasanka the area of Gaura spreaded southward to Utkal and Kongod and the name Gaura became popular. So the Pala Sena kings were known as *Gaureswar, Gaurendra* etc. titles. Besides above, there were more zones in ancient Bengal, viz. *Samatat* (probably Khulna, Jessore and the lower Gangetic Valley, Faridpur, Dacca and Tripura), *Tamralipta* (south-eastern portion of Midnapur), *Harikel* (Chandradwip, Shrihatta, Tripura and Mymensing in general) and Bakla (Barisal). During the Hindu period there was no such State or Province as *Bangaladesh*. It is during the Muslim time that the word 'Bangala' originated and gradually it got popular.

Whatever may the fact be, there is no two opinions that the name 'Bangala' or 'Bengal' was a loan or corrupt from the word 'Bongal', which we have already mentioned, is placed with Chittagong (in East Bengal or Eastern Pakistan). Different dialect-speaking inhabitants of this part of Bengal are being teased by the people of West Bengal as 'Bangal' (বাঙাল) and this is used in the sense of uncultured but its literary meaning is those persons who live in 'Bongal' or 'Bangala', while they call the latter as 'ghoti' (ঘটি) or 'gotichor' (ঘটিচোর) meaning 'water-pot' or 'water-pot stealer' but the justification of these terms are not clear to the author. However, it can be said that Chittagong is the torch-bearer of tradition of 'Bengalla' or 'Bongal' which has again been expanded later coming into contact with other regions. Details about this may be obtained in D. C. Sircar's "Studies in the Geography of Ancient and Mediaval India."

However, it is not clear whether *prachyadesa* or *pratyanta-desa* was included in the empire of Chandragupta (321-297 B.C.). But it is historically known that after the conquest of Kalinga by Asoka (261 B.C.) the border-Bengal (Midnapur) became a part and parcel of the great Mauryan empire. Fa-Hien (between 405 and 411 A.D.) described

Tamralipti (Tamluk) as a kingdom at the sea-mouth containing twenty-four Viharas with resident priests. It is in the 3rd century B.C. when Bengal was a part of Mauryan empire imbibed Jainism and then Buddhism after a period of about 500 years of Mahavira's rise. Prior to that the local people worshipped Father God (Siva) Mother Goddess (Sakti), Nature, totem and ancestors along with Vedic Gods and Goddesses. And in the 4th century Imperial Guptas implanted Brahmanism.

Modern Bengal:

It is to be noted in this connection that geographically modern Bengal can be divided into three regions. On the north lie the Himalayan mountains with extensive forests on their flanks. The southern portion is geologically a continuation of the eastern highlands of southern Bihar and the rest of Bengal is formed by recent alluvial deposits. Between early thirteenth and nearly the end of the fourtenth century practically, the whole of United Bengal came under the Muslim rule. And as a consequences of the Battle of Plassey, the English advanced from the traders and admitted on the surface to that of ruling race. The wealth of Bengal about a century before the British came into power has been vividly described by the European scholars. When Wellesley took over India's Governor-Generalship in 1798, Bengal roughly included East Pakistan and West Bengal with the exception of Darjeeling district, whole of Bihar, Silchar and Cachar of Assam and Benaras of U. P. In 1801 the Company acquired from the Nawab of Oudh seven districts which were added to Bengal. Further additions were made in 1825. Thus it is apparent that Bengal at the time was a very big territory.[4]

In order to cripple Bengal and her inhabitants the partition of Bengal was planned by Lord Curzon in 1905, but it could not be materialised. Again in 1910 the partition of Bengal was planned and in the next year it was materialised. Almost simultaneously the capital of India was transferred from Calcutta to Delhi, Curiously enough, there was no movement in the political level for this partition and historic change. Of course, there was a certain dissatisfaction among the business communities for obvious reason. But as is the usual habit of the capitalists, they immediately surrendered to the power in their own characteristic way. Even after the formation of West Bengal, which is practically one-third of the United Bengal, the State is splited again

4. Ghosal, H. R. *Economic Transition in Bengal Presidency*, Calcutta, K. L. Mukhopadhyaya, 1966.

in the sixties of this century for adjustments with neighbouring States of India.

West Bengal:

With the partition of India, West Bengal was born on 15. 8. 1947, out of the Western portion of United Bengal. West Bengal has an area of 29,370 sq. miles i.e. 37.46 per cent of the area of undivided Bengal. By adjustment with the neighbouring Indian States it has come to 33,829 sq. miles according to 1961 census. It has 2.87 per cent of the the total area of India. The State has a population of 34,926,279 which is 7.96 per cent of India's total population with a density of 1032 per sq. mile. There are 293 literates for every 1000, (40.1 per cent male, 17.0 per cent female) and for every 1000 males there are 878 females. It is bounded on the east by East Pakistan and Assam. On the south by Bay of Bengal, on the west by Bihar and Orissa, and on the north by Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan. Agriculture gives occupation to the majority of the people; it has the largest area under jute in the union of India and the second largest under tea and the third largest under rice. The State has 75.55 per cent rural and 24.45 per cent urban population and the birth and death rates are 16.9 and 6.7 per cents respectivly.

East Bengal:

East Bengal or Eastern Pakistan comprises the eastern territories of the partitioned province of Bengal and Sylhet, formerly a district of Assam. It has more than half of the population of Pakistan but only 15 per cent of the total land area of Pakistan. The eastern portion of Eastern Pakistan is tropical, heavily watered, lying along and largely below the valley of the Brahmaputra; widely intersected by waterways. The main occupation of the people is agriculture. The main food crops are rice and wheat. Out of the total population of Pakistan (93,831,982), East Pakistan has 50,853,721 i.e. 46 per cent. Muslims are by far the largest religious group being 88 per cent of the total population of Pakistan. Hindus formed the second largest with about 11 per cent of the total population (18 per cent in East Pakistan). The literacy rate of the whole country was 19.2 per cent (21.5 per cent East Pakistan). Male had a literary of 26% nearly 19% higher than of the females. The Census of 1961 listed 24 languages as spoken in Pakistan. Bengali was spoken by 55.5 per cent of the population and stood first in the list of mother languages, while the Punjabi is the second (29 per cent).

Calcutta Metropolitan District :

Considering population, various types of profession, different categories of people, nerve-centre of industry, national economy, a major part of West Bengal is the Greater Calcutta or the Calcutta Metropolitan District which cover an area of 490 sq miles.[5] It stretches from Kalyani on the north-east to Kalyanpur on the south-east and from Bansberia on the north-west to Uluberia on the south-west with a population of 7.5000,000 where all types of people that are available in any part of India irrespective of caste and religious groups are available and live together. It is nothing but a miniature India. Therefore to know the land and the people of the State it is necessary to treat them in an all-India perspective and in general way.

III

People :

The people of Bengal will be treated as a part of the great Indian people later. We will treat here a few Bengalee characterestics. It must be carefully considered that the partition of Bengal in 1947 has crippled the Bengalees of both the parts considerably. Then both the parts are getting industrialised, agriculturists and village-folks have come to prefer to be a *Babu* than a tiller. Their traditional aspects are also getting changed.[6] It is no exaggeration to say that Bengal had its exceptional store of folklore. The prosperity was based on the fertile soil yielding valuable crops like jute, rice, tea and others. People were very happy and from their happiness favourable condition created for flowering folklore in the United Bengal. We will analyse a few *genre* of folklore of Bengal in the foregoing chapters in our effort to study the status of womenfolk of Bengal. Prior to that we will say a few words about the people from ancient period to modern time.

Historians are not agreed whether the people of Bengal were a non-Aryan race or closely akin to the Vedic Aryans or a mixture of non-Aryans, Dravidians and Vedic Aryans together. Some have gone to the extent of saying that their civilization was post-Rig Vedic. It may be pointed out that the people of 'Banga' or Bengal as we may call now,

5. Banerjee, Bireswar et. al *Industrial Profile of the Calcutta Metropolitan District*, Calcutta, Indian Publications, 1967.
6. Sen Gupta, Sankar : Foreword *in* "A Comparative Study of Bengal Folktale", Underworld beliefs and underworld helpers : Sukhu ar Dukhu, by Ralph Troger, Calcutta, Indian Publications, 1966.

were mainly dominated by the native rites, rituals, communal ceremonies, beliefs etc. where Aryan instructions or doctrines had meagre influence. When the native people were conquered, the Aryans brought with them their ideas, traditions, thoughts, culture and language which were foreign to the sons of the soil. The newcomers attempted to teach and educate the natives in their own way for obvious reason, but were unable to teach Sanskrit which was, it is said, their language. Neither Aryans were able to understand the language of the native people nor natives could understand the Aryans. From this misunderstanding the Aryans began to call the sons of the soil as 'Bayamshi' (বয়াংশি) crows, pigeons and other birds (because they speak like birds). It took a long time and a great efforts to teach Sanskrit. So was the case in spreading the Aryan culture among the Bengalees and that too were confined to the people of the upper strata.

It can be said that the people of Bengal were close to Sindhu Valley Civilization that resembles more Sumerian culture of the old than the Aryan culture of the early Vedic time. Possibly, during the centuries between the full-fledged development of Sindhu Valley culture and the birth of early Vedic Civilization, the non-Aryan and Dravidians spread over different parts of northern and southern India. By the times the Rig Vedic hymns were composed, they had settlement throughout India and Bengalees are one of them who are more or less a mixed community[7] and pre-eminently Mongolo-Dravidians, worshipped, Nature, totems, ancestors and Father God and Mother Goddess.

The Aryans seem at first to have settled in the Upper Valley of the Sindhu from where they migrated eastwards. The Aryan civilization was well established in India by 1500 B.C. The eastward expansion of the early Aryans motivated chiefly by the desire of fresh fertile lands, naturally brought them face to face with the non-Aryans who were possessing the lands of the east. The struggle was long and deadly. In the grim, hand-to-hand fight with non-Aryans, the Aryans must have had to suffer appreciable loses. On the other hand, in their slow and difficult marches the princes and fighters might have been accompanied by many other classes of people—peasants and artisans, hunters and trappers, priests and bards.

But in course of time racial antagonism between the two subsided, and took place between Aryan and enslaved non-Aryans, though aristrocrats still looked upon racial intermixture with disfavour. The mingling of the conquerors with the conquered population was in any rate a slow gradual process. Further, impact of the two cultures was

7. **Sen Gupta, Sankar A Survey of Folklore Study in Bengal: West Bengal and East Pakistan, Calcutta, Indian Publications, 1967.**

mutual. Gradually attention was given to agriculture. Agricultural improvement have been due in part to the discovery of iron. Trade and industry grew in importance from when one finds the rise of a number of castes on occupational basis.

In religion, two parallel developments may be traced. On the one hand, the scriptural aspect was elaborated, if not perfected from the time of the Atharvaveda and the importance of charms, spell and incantations emphasised as a part of popular religious growth. On the other hand, the highest philosopical and metaphysical exercises which the human mind is capable of were practised by the *Munis* (the sages).

We come to the question of caste now. It is well-known that the word caste comes from the Portuguese adventurers who followed Vasco de Gama. The word itself is derived from the Latin *castus* and implies purity of breed. Caste in Bengal may be defined as a collection of families or group of families bearing a common name, claiming common descent, professing to follow the same hereditary calling, bound together by a common occupation and observing certain common usages which relate more particularly to marriage, to food and to questions of ceremonial pollution. Caste also rules its members by the exercise of a jurisdiction and the extent of which varies in making the authority of the community.

We have already noted that during the Mauryan period Bengal came into contact with the Aryans. Up to the fifth century this contact was in smattering condition. Close connection between the two were established during the Gupta period when Kulinism came into existence. The Brahmanas or the top most class of people of this period, were responsible for worshipping, conducting of sacrifice and teaching pupils. In the Pala-Sena time many Brahmanas were found in engaging themselves in administrative work. The scope of their activities extended further in the progress of time. It is necessary to mention that next to Brahmana, at the top of the second class, come the Baidyas, who are by tradition physicians and next the writer caste or Kayasthas. Then came other castes one after another. These castes of Bengal cannot be explained in terms of four-fould caste structure of the old order. Risely had classified these castes in different types such as *the tribal type, the functional* or *occupational type, the sectairan type, castes formed by crossing, national castes, castes formed by migration* and *castes formed by changes of custom*. We are detailing below a few types of occupational castes which have been reported by H. Risely in his "Tribes and Castes of Bengal" and A Mitra in his "The Tribes and Castes of West Bengal", and many others. Following are the types: (1) *Bagal*—a community working as

cowherd; (2) *Bagdi*—a cultivating, fishing and menial caste; (3) *Bairagi*—a class of Hindu religious mendicants who worship Bishnu; (4) *Barui*—cultivation of piper betel is their traditional occupation and at present some have taken to trade ;(5) *Bauri*—a cultivating, earth-working and palanquin-bearing caste; (6) *Bhuiya*—cultivation (7) *Bhumij*—agriculturists, originally military service and the landlord class claim to be Rajputs; (8) *Deswali Majhi*—cultivation; (9) *Dom*—sweepers, remover of night-soil and dead bodies (10) *Gandhabanik*—a spice-selling, druggist and grocer caste; (11) *Ghasi*—a fighting and cultivating caste, also act as musicians at weedings and festivals etc. (12) *Garhwal*—holders of service tenures who act as rural police etc.: (13) *Goala*—a pastoral caste of India; (14) *Jhalo Malo* or *Malo*—a boating and fishing caste; (15) *Jugi*—a weaving caste (16) *Kahar*—a cultivating and palanquin bearing caste; (17) *Kamar*—a metal working caste; (18) *Kharia*—the Plain Kharias are cultivators and Hill Kharias mostly depend on jungle products: (19) *Kol*—cultivators and labourers in different type of activities, e.g. colliery, plantation etc.; (20) *Kumbhakar-Kumor*—the potter caste; (21) *Kurmi*—cultivating caste and a few have taken to trading in grain; (22) *Mahali*—a caste of palanquin bearers; (23) *Mahisya*—a cultivating caste; (24) *Moira*—confectioner caste; (25) *Mech* (26) *Mistry*—a carpenter or masion worker; (27) *Muchi*—is the leather dressing and cobbling caste; (28) *Munda;* (29) *Santal;* (30) *Muslim* —a community professing Muslim religion; (31) *Lodha*—a criminal tribe; (32) *Nagesia*—a tea plantation labourers; (33) *Namasudra*—boating and cultivation; (34) *Napit*—the barbar caste; (35)*Oraon*; (36) *Poundra;* (37) *Rabha;* (38) *Rajbanshi;* (39) *Baisa Saha*—a business community (40) *Sunri*—original profession of the caste was manufacture and sale and spirituous liquor and trade; (41) *Tanti*—the weaver caste; (42) *Teli*—a oil pressing and trading caste; (43) *Buddhists*—followers of Lord Buddha and others. The women of all these castes, groups and communities have their peculiar position in the respective societies. There are a great many books and articles written by the native and foreign scholars on different aspects of the castes of Bengal. Since this is not a study on the caste of Bengal we will stop this point now and will proceed to look at the Kulinism in Bengal.

Kulinism :

The advanced intellectual development is reflected in the work of Sankhya and Upanishadic (Vedanta) schools of philosophy, which is the most important of the six philosophical schools of the Hindus.

Directly or indirectly, they exercised a great influence on the subsequent development. Thus Adisura, a king of Bengal, invited five Brahmins of great learning and high character to come to settle down in Bengal from Kanauj (Uttar Pradesh) in order to spread the high ideals of Brahmanism. Unfortunately very little is known about this powerful king. It is written in *Kulajigrantha* that,

আসীৎ পুরা মহারাজ আদিশূরঃ প্রতাপবান।
আনীতবান্ দ্বিজান পঞ্চগোত্র সমুদ্ভবান॥

About two or three centuries afterwards, Bengal was under the rule of Sena dynasty, which originally hailed from the Karnatak speaking region of the south (Mysore). In the 4th century A.D. Guptas ruled Bengal. Of them, Matri Gupta Sasanka extended the boundary of the land upto Beneras. About 900 century A.D. Gupta Kings ruled Bengal. Of them, Matri Gupta Sasanka, Palas and then Senas in the 11th century ruled the land. It is again traditionally held that Ballala Sena (1158-1178 A.D.) of Sena dynasty was responsible for the introduction of Kulinism in this part of the country.[8] Ballala Sena in his anxiety to save his kingdom by that subterfuge of Kulinism alienated the sympathy of the people of Brahminic faith, the true supporters of Sena rule, and yet failed to conciliate wholly the large Buddhistic population.

Ballala Sena also helped in the evolution of Neo-Saktism, a peculiar amalgam of Buddhistic, Brahminic and other much older forms of Bengal's indigenous faiths. In the 10th century during the Pala regime there was the birth of Sahajia-cult, enjoining union between man and woman as means of union between finite and infinite. Before this Neo-Bengali (Hindu) society had inadequate time to unify and consolidate itself fully, there came the death or last days of Lakhshmana Sena, during the 12th century when suddenly the Muslim, under Md. Bin Buktiyar, attacked and conquered Bengal as a bolt from the bule. By 1200 A.D. i.e. at the end of Sena rule, the followers of Neo-Saktism and Vaishnivism while not professing or abiding by Vedic religion but adhering to Aryan Varnashrama strictly, formed a Neo-Bengali society and religion.

Polygamy :

As we look back upon Hindu society in Bengal at the end of the eighteenth century, we are confronted by a rather painful spectacle.

8. Chakravarty, S. C. "A Study of Kulinism in Bengal" in *Folklore*, Calcutta, Vol. III, Nos. 8 & 9, August and September, 1962.

Life had become cluttered with social evils of many kinds. Polygamy was in vogue among upper class Brahmins; ritualism and ostentiatious worship had become a substitute for genuine religious endeavour or experience.

Polygamy in Bengalee upper class society was perhaps increasing around the second half of the nineteenth century in alarming proportions. The upper caste Hindus, especially the Brahmins, were indeed responsible for it. The Kulin Brahmins used their high social position as an effective means of livlihood. After the Widow Marriage Act of 1856 a large scale movement was started in Bengal Presidency to stop the practice. The agitation had brought some good to *kulin* wives. By the turn of the century, the practice was beginning to pass away, not through legislation but through the pressure of changing social climate.

Culture :

Inspite of the partition again and again the language and culture of Bengal remain undivided or in other word the cultural influence of Bengal is not completely restricted by the limitation set up by geography. It is in the 8th century Bengal became a distinct regional unit but the language of Bengal originated not earlier than the middle of the 10th century. Bengali is related not only to the language of northern India, but also to the major language of Pakistan. Since its origin Bengali language had passed through two successive stages of development—Old Bengali (950-1350) and Middle Bengali (1350-1800). The modern Bengali is in its third stage which commences from 1800. The Bengali alphabet in its printed form took a shape in 1778. Needless to remember that during the entire Middle Bengali period *Brajabuli* was cultivated exclusively by the Vaishnava lyric poets. The fully articulated Bengali alphabet appears in the 15th century and upto the end of 18th century there were, so to say, two styles of writing—the ornamental script and the script which is found in modern writing. Bengali verse got its shape since the 10th century and literary prose in the early 19th century. Riddle-like verses known as *charyapadas* are the specimen of Old Bengali. In the 14th century Bengali language gathered strength when legends or *mangalas* of unorthodox deities like Manasa, Chandi, Dharma, Siva were written and Radha-Krishna songs were composed. The period between the 15th and 16th centuries is known as an Age of renaissance when Chaitanya Vaishnavism began to combat Muslim conversion and Hindu social austerity. Much secular narratives of folk-origin appeared during this time.

Historically Bengali culture can be divided in the following three

distinct groups—1800-1857, 1857-1919 and 1919-1947. Then Bengali culture is getting bifurcated into two after 1947—Hinduised Bengali culture (West Bengal) and Islam dominated Bengali culture (Eastern Pakistan).

Bengalee Hindus are organised under a system of castes and are subject to code of laws and rituals which derive clearly from north-western sources. Its ancient temples were related to *Rekha* order of the north, although, from sixteenth century onwards, it succeeded in developing a new local order of sacred architecture which is markedly different from its earlier one.

But inspite of these evidences of northern affiliation, there are a number of cultural traits, obviously carried over from a more remote past, which point to other direction altogether in matter of cultural relationship. We know that rice is the staple food of the Bengalees ; and it plays a large part in ceremonial practies. Then oil. Oil and rice both of which are forms of important elements of diet and in this matter Orissa, Bengal, Assam, and Bihar are closely related to one another. The oil and rice have acquired distinct places in rituals and magical practices of the Bengalees and to that effect Bengal has a direct relationship with the south India. But that part of the country has altogether a different culture which perhaps needs no clarification.

We know from Hiuen-Tsaing that the character of the women of Bengal were amiable. Vatsayana said that they are *Mridubhasani* (gentle voiced), *Komalangi* (delicate body) and *anuragabati* (devoted). Paharpur excavations reveal that the inhabitants of ancient Bengal used to wear clothes like the modern Bengalees. The following poem is written by one Lakshmidhar where the use of veil by the women of Bengal is described :

শিরোযদবগুণ্ঠিতং সহজরূঢ়লজ্জানতং
গতি চ পরিস্খলং চরণকোটিলগ্নে দৃশৌ।
বাচঃ পরিমিতং চ যন্মধুরমন্দমন্দাক্ষরং
নিজং তদীয়মঙ্গনা বদতি নূনমুচ্চৈঃ কুলম

The next verse clarify the idea of their simple dress :

ভালে কজ্জল বিন্দুবিন্দু কিরস্পর্ধী মৃণালাঙ্কুরো
দোর্বল্লীধু শলাটু ফেনিল ফলোত্তংসশ্চ কর্ণাতিথিঃ
ধম্মিল্লস্তিল বাভিষবণস্নিগ্ধ স্বভাবাদয়ং
পান্থান্ মন্থরয়তানাগর বধূবর্গস্য বেশগ্রহঃ

The above two quotations are self-explanatory. The first one means, the veiled woman is bashful, her movement is steady, she is

looking at her way, her words are calm and sweet. By all these, the woman is announcing her culture and noble birth. The next verse means, the woman puts a dot of collyrium on her forehead, wristlet of the lotus in her hand, the bud of soap-nut on her ear as ear-ring, and seasamum twin on her braid of hair.

Historians and philologists have also drawn attention to the use of betel-nuts and betel-leaf and use of turmeric etc. as being a common feature between India and the Southeast Asia. These seem to indicate that various elements of material culture of Bengal and ceremonies are associated and crossed the boundaries. These "made Bengal one of the States like Orissa where northern, southern and perhaps south-eastern Asiatic elements of culture became fused with one another, or remained distinguishable inspite of forming one heterogeneous conglomeration of various cultures."[9]

The Kulinism has, in effect, created castes within caste or in other words attempted to create mutually exclusive classes, not only among the Brahmins but permitted in every section of other castes also its baneful principal. Every caste, high or low, has two or three sub-sections among whom inter-marriage and sometime interdining even is prohibited. Every trade-guild or profession has hardend into castes having different sub-sections thereunder according to their location. The castes have grown in Bengal in a huge proportion and in different varieties together with a host of peculiar surnames which are unknown elsewhere. We have already mentioned a few occupational castes in Bengal an earlier part of this study.

The imperialism encouraged and stimulated the growth and display of this instinct to divide the masses into several artificial and mutually antagonistic compartments i.e. classes to perpetuate their rule over them. This idea with a different attitude is responsible for the growth of castes, subcastes, *kulas, varnas* etc. and Kulinism sprang up. But Kulinism of Bengal is an extreme example which could nowhere be found, yet it had got such a stronghold over the Bengalees, although to an extremely limited sphere, that even now, man can be easily available having great respect for this custom and actually adhering to it.

This eventually led to hypergamy and form a polygamy restricted mostly to upper class Brahman famielies. Eventually class stratification affected other castes down to 'Clean Sudras'. Hindu society in Bengal became thoroughly patterned after Brahmanical model which clearly binds the Hindu inhabitants of Bengal with the rest of India. The heterodoxy, or a mild degree of non-conformism has, atleast,

9. Bose, N. K. Modern Bengal, Calcutta, Vidyodaya.

released the intellect and spirit of Bengal free to experiment with new ideas, without a feeling of guilt for not being closely tied to orthodoxy.

IV

The study will reveal that a woman as an infant, when born, her birth was cursed ; as a girl, by her grace of purity, she becomes the joy and blessing of the parental hearth; as a growing woman she is deprived of the right to perform much religious duties but she was imposed some upon herself. As a wife, she was made to submit to her husband like a child ; yet she counselled him as a friend. As a widow she is placed in dependence upon her son, or nearest relation ; yet she governs the family.

But due to the change of time and values all these have again been affected. Arden piety, spiritual and ascetic tenderness, complete abnegation of herself, unlimited devotion to her family, a boundless need of love, are considered in many cases as primitive idea and thus she is growing with a new values and ideas, thereby forming present day character.

We have found already that sentiments, which still preserve their purity and which find elegant expression in the oral traditional literature are yet wanting in the moral grandeur, that supreme idea of duty, which are so deeply impressed upon traditional literature. Through sacrifice, she invokes the blessings of heaven upon earth ; and mingled her enthusiastic voice with the happy and majestic chair celebrating the song of the might of Nature. As a wife and companion of man, she excites him to those struggles that are to bring about the triumphs of civilization, she upholds him in the paths of uprightness, and brings him back when he suffers from it.

Till the other day, a woman had only exercised individual influence in her own family, but after 1947 she has been exercising her powers in other fields too—she has expanded her activities in various walks of life. Therefore, a systematic study of the social institutions, customs, manners, *vratas*, marriage rituals, fertility rites etc. are necessary along with the prevailing condition of the women of the contemporary society.

Keeping all that what have been said so long in view we will try to observe the status and position of the women of Bengal in an all-India perspective. Because the fundamental unity of the country is rooted in the psychology of its inhabitants that can only be viewed from that way.

We find certain common ideas are practised by the Bengalees, so by Indians from time immemorial, viz., a sense of unity of all life

through its being an expression of the unseen reality, a desire for synthesis, recognition of sorrows of life leading to a sincere attempt to go to the root cause of these with a view to remove them from the life, a desire to attain to the unseen Reality as the solution of all evil and suffering, mystic realization by discipline, faith and devotion, a sense of the sacredness of all life, charity and tolerance.

In West Bengal people of all the major Indian languages live together and influence each other's neighbours. Table 1 will substantiate the population of West Bengal and India by mother tongue.

TABLE 1

Population of West Bengal and India by Mother Tongue 1961

	Assamese 1	Bengali 2	Gujarati 3	Hindi 4
West Bengal	8,278	29,408,246	25,707	1,894,039
India	6,795,580	32,972,470	20,052,469	120,792,275
	Kannada 5	**Kashmiri 6**	**Malayalam 7**	**Marathi 8**
	683	19	83,320	13 239
	17,302,082	1,907,799	16,935,978	32,471,654
	Oriya 9	**Panjabi 10**	**Sanskrit 11**	**Santali 12**
	212,890	12,398	4	1,121,447
	15,597,803	9,530,863	2,460	—
	Tamil 13	**Telugu 14**	**Urdu 15**	**English 16**
	32,663	80,930	832,847	39,325
	30,109,724	37,614,768	23,148,937	—
	Chinese 17	**Others 18**	**Total 19**	
	10,325	34,926,521	34,926,279	
	—	66,788,807	431,293,661	

We stand for freedom and initiative so far as the individual is concerned. It also marks the beginning of an age of rationalistic attitude and physical science that have over-reached themselves. Bengalee women can, therefore, best be understood as an unit of great Indian womanhood in psychological terms. (*Continued*).

Please note that for want of space we could not publish regular features in this issue which will be continued from the next. Ed.

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M. N. BASU

THE MOON AND THE MAN

Jules Verne's "Form the Earth to the Moon" 1865 was based on fairly sound scientific principles which follows H. G. Well's "First Man in the Moon". Tsilokovsky, Robert H. Goddard. H. Oberth inspired many for space travel. How folk people of India reacted to moon is described here by a socio-biological scientist. This may attract many and more serious interest may be found to widen our knowledge about the moon even after the landing on the moon.

MOON lore is fascinating and mingled with fable, fantasy and romance. From the long gone ages the moon's phases have been one of the man's most reliable means of recknoning time, with the twenty eight day period between the successive appearances of the new moon the counting of the month. The lunar calendar is a good guide for the orthodox Hindus to their domestic and socio-religious routine work. It fixes up the auspicious dates for the name giving and marriage ceremonies. The second day of week which the Bengali call *Sombar* or Monday, is named after the moon as per Gregorian calendar.

The moon figures in the religious and ceremonial beliefs and practices by the people of all countries without any caste or creed, without any religious faith, be they moderns or primitives. Among the Hindus of North India *Karba chauth* is one of the old Indian customs connected with the moon. This is observed in thousands every year. On the fourth day in the month of Kartik (October-November) after the full-moon or *Purnima* the married Hindu women dedicate the day to the welfare of their husbands by observing fast from the dawn to the apprearance of the moon at night. When the fast is broken the married women look at the rising moon. A drink is then offered to the moon and thus the day long ritual ends.

Practically all over India particularly in rural areas full-moon-day is an occasion for festivity and religious observance. Fairs are held and both men and women pay visit to the temples. Holy bath is resorted to in the *Maghi Purnima* (Full-moon-day of the Bengali month Magh, January-February). The holi festival (*Dol*) is observed by the Hindus on the full-moon-day in the month of Falgoon (February-March). The people of Bihar and U. P. observe *Rakhi Purnima* in the month of Bhadra (August-September)—a day for close and intimate friendship and relationship by tying red or coloured thread. In geographical Bengal *Nastachandra*—a day on the day of the full moon in the month of Bhadra is observed. On this day young boys and girls are found to steal fruits, sweets etc. The Hindus observe a great festival on the 6th day of the full-moon known as *Jamai Sasthi* when the sons-in-law are specially invited in the house of their fathers-in-law. The mothers-in-law observe fast and usually take fruits and sweets on the day. The sons-in-law are sumptuously fed and presented with new clothings. This is usually done by a woman who is a mother of a child. It indicates an idea of her child's welfare.

Towards the close of the Autumn the *Sarodiya utsab* in the name of the *Durga Puja* is celebrated by the Hindus specially in Bengal. After the 7th day of the month of Aswin (September-October) and before the 4th day of the month of Kartik on the 6th full-moon-day is known as the *Sasthi,* opening of the four day *Durga Puja* festival. Here the mother-goddess *Durga* is worshipped as the daughter of the Himalaya. *Ma Durga* with her two sons *Kartick* and *Ganesh* by names and two daughters known as *Lakshmi* and *Saraswati* come to her father's house and stay for 4 days. Then on the full-moon night of this month goddess of wealth, *Lakshmi,* is worshipped. In the month of Agrahayan (November-December) *Rash Purnima* is held with decorated lights etc. The goddess of learning, *Saraswati,* is worshipped in the month of Magh (January-February) on the 5th day of the full-moon. The day is popularly known as *Sri Panchami.*

The moon also figures in the religious beliefs, faiths and ceremonies of other groups like the Muslims, the Sikhs, the Christians and so on. The calendars of the Muslims and the Hebrews are based on the lunar months. The Jewish Passover is celebrated on the full-moon and the Easter occurs on the first Monday following the full-moon after the Spring equinox. The *Id,* a Muslim festival, is always celebrated on the day following the appearance of the new-moon. If the very small crescent moon is not visible on the sky in the west in the evening the performance of *Id* festival is postponed by a day. The expectancy is specially keen on the eve of *Id-ul-Fitr,* which follows the *Ramzan*

month—a full fasting for the day of the whole month. Everyday on the glimpse of the moon in the evening one breaks his fast. The proverbial usage *Id-ka-Chand* is expressed to describe a relation or a friend whom one meets after a long interval.

The founder of the Sikh religion, Guru Nanak, was born on *Kartik Purnima,* the day of the full-moon. The Sikhs celebrate his birth anniversary by congregating in their temples known as *Gurudwaras* in the morning and they illuminate their homes at night.

In the month of Baisak (April-May) on the full moon day known as *Buddha Purnima,* the Buddhists observe a sacred day with three fold significance. The day is marked as the day of Buddha's birth day, enlightenment and death or the attainment of salvation, means *Nirvana.* In recent times some of the primitives specially the tribal people like the Santals of Ayodhya Hills of the district of Purulia observe the Buddha Purnima day by hunting.

Among the Lodhas of Midnapur, West Bengal those who belong to *Kotal gotra* have adopted the Moon as their totem. When the moon completely disappears from the sky i.e. on the darknight or *Amabasya* the *Kotal gotra* members go into ceremonial pollution and throw away their earthen pots which being replaced by new ones on the day following. This is rigidly observed by the *Kotal gotra* members on every complete disappearance of the moon from the sky.

When the sun rises during the day time and the moon at night have been delineated by the Lodhas in their folk-lore. They believe that the sun and the moon are two sisters and they live together. Both of them have large number of children. The stars are all their children. But the moon wanted to have more children than the sun. Both of them (the sun and the moon) were afraid of the space in the sky. Then moon devised a plan to kill some of her children. She once told the sun of this plan and the sun agreed to. The moon then hid her children and told the sun that she had devoured her children. The sun on good faith devoured her children. But then the moon appeared in the sky with her children and a quarrel in between the sun and the moon began. The sun decided not to see her sister's (moon) face any more. Since then the sun has been found to rise during the day time and the moon at night.

The moon is associated with the name giving ceremony among the Oraons of Chotanagpur as noted by S. C. Roy. He says 'a child born on a Monday is called *Soma* or *Somai,* if a male, and *Somri* if a female.

The Kharias believe that the sun and the moon are husband and wife and the stars are their children. The sun is named by them as *Bero* and the moon is called *Lerang.* A year is called by them as

Memon, A month is called *Lerang* (the Moon) as the Kharias reckon the lunar month of two fortnights.

In the month of Baisak, on the third day of the full-moon what is known as *Akshay tritiya,* new enterprises are done by the Hindus. One such thing is to husk mustard and to make solution in hot water called *Kasundi.*

In Egypt and Greece there runs a proverbial belief that sleeping in the moon-light weakens the eyes. But in some parts of India it is believed that the conception of a child in moonlight during a full-moon will be a male one. The Indians also regard the full-moon of *Sharad-Purnima* (in Autumn) as auspicious. The legend says that on this night when Lord Krishna danced with the Gopis, the sky is supposed to rain nectar. Pots with milk are kept in the open throughout the whole night to catch the nectar. This is credited with health-giving properties. This milk is sometimes used as a special ingredient in medicines. The *Sharad-Purnima* is also associated with a belief, a combination of romance and faith. In India, specially in the north, there is a belief that on this night if a childless lady sees the Taj Mahal in Agra, the greatest monument to marital love, and sees the reflection of the full-moon in a pot with milk, she will soon be pregnant.

Old traditional treatises on sex have numerous references about the moon and has also its influence on sex relations. Thus the moon plays an important role in sexual behaviour which has also come in recent times from Havelock Ellis the renowned British psychologist and sexologist. The word 'honeymoon' is derived from moon. Originally this was not meant a period of holiday spent together by a newly married couple but a gradual waning of mutual love like the waning of the moon.

In many religious faiths the moon is personified as a god or a goddess. The early Egyptians worshipped Thoth, the god of the moon. Salene, Artimis and Hecate are all identified with the moon as the Greeks. The Roman hunting goodess, Diana is believed to have used the crescent moon as her bow and moon beams as arrows. The moon eclipses have always been regarded as portents of evil or misfortune. The moon is believed to have been blood red at the time of crucifixation. In the middle of the second century B. C. when the Romans were at war with Macedon, an eclipse of the moon was interpreted as portending the eclipse of a King and discouraged the Macedonians. During the last voyage of Columbus when he and his men were stranded and also on the verge of starvation, he exploited the primitive fear of the moon eclipse to tide over the critical situation. The natives were warned against the divine wrath for failing to bring food for them.

He told them to watch the rising full moon that night as a token. On seeing the inflamed red moon the Red Indians were seized with consternation and they came running to the ship from all direction with food for them.

The moon has a prominent place in Indian mythology. There are many legends and romantic tales connected with the origin of the moon, its phases and also its dark spots. One old Indian tradition relates that the moon was born when the gods and demons churned the ocean together for *Amrita,* a highly tasteful liquid of immortality. Besides the moon there were Lakshmi, goddess of wealth and Dhanwantari, brother of the moon, who is claimed as the author of Ayurveda, the first Indian system of medicine. Another fable runs thus —when the god Rama was a child he was fascinated by the beauty ot the moon and cried to have it. But he was consoled when he saw the reflection of the moon in a pot containing water. The mythology of the Hindus has a romantic expression of the waxing and waning of the moon. It is believed that the moon had twenty-seven wives and all were the daughters of the god *Daksha* (Lord of demons). The affections of the moon were centred only in Rohini being youngest the wife. The other twenty-six wives being neglected complained to their father. Daksha being enraged cursed the moon to have made him extinct. But the twenty-six wives interfered and begged for a less punishment. Daksha agreed upon the prayer and said that the moon would continually languish to a point of vanishing but would revive and grow again. According to another story, the moon kidnapped *Tara,* wife of *Brihaspati* or Jupiter which led to a great battle. The son born of the illicit union was *Budh,* the god of wisdom, which is named as *Budhbar* or Wednesday.

About the dark spots on the moon a legend ascribes to an act of Brahma, the Lord of Creation. When Brahma wanted to make a wife for Kamadeva, the god of love and passion, he looked for the lovely substance from which to fashion her and scooped it out of the face of the moon. So many spots are formed on the face of the moon. The spots in the moon have been depicted in the folklore of the Bunas of Bengal. The sun and the moon are described by them as brother and sister. The moon was once brighter than the sun. One day they quarrelled and as a result the sun took some mud and flung at his sister's (moon) face. The moon did not wash her face and the moon became less powerful than the sun and the spots that are found in the moon are due to scattered patches of mud. The spots in the moon are also attributed by the village folks of Bengal. There is a banyan tree in the moon. The old mother of the moon is found to sew torn clothes

into a wrapper like material what is known in Bengali term as 'Kantha'. The moon is identified as a physical beauty with loveliness and brightness and glorified with silvery cool radiance. The poets and the writers are attracted to make comparison. Sarat Chandra Chatterjee a great novelist of Bengal, has depicted a comparison in his book 'Devdas' with moon and the heroine. When devdas sloshed Parbati, and made scar marks on her beautiful face, Parbati asked Devda, what you did? To this Devdas replied the charming moon has black spot so your lovely face should have. Many writers have nurtured the old belief that the moon sometimes affects men and women's reasons and drives them to foolish activity or desperate deeds being mentally unbalanced. The word 'lunacy' is derived from the Latin word 'luna' for the moon. Byron gives an unusual view when he says 'The devil's in the moon for mischief'. So also Twain cannot help in expressing that every man, like the moon, has a dark side he never shows to any one.

There are many superstitious beliefs current with the moon specially with eclipses. The cultivators in some countries believe that the most suitable time to sow crops which grow above the soil is when the moon is bright. The waxing or the waning of the moon, according to an old English belief, affects the growth of hair. Looking at the moon or pointing at it over some one's shoulder sometimes brings trouble. A belief prevalent in India is to see the moon in the month of *Bhadra* or *Ganesh Chaturthi Day* one becomes unlucky as it is revealed in the case of the Lord Krishna who was accused of steaing a necklace. In Tulsidas's Ramayana it is narrated that seeing the moon on the *Ganesh Chaturthi Day* one can be faught with mischief as looking at the shinning forhead of woman.

The Kom Kukis believe that if any one of their group performs good work in his life time he will go to the moon after death—a place of serene beauty. But if he does not do good work he will go to the sun to be fired by heat.

The traditional Hindus are apprehensive of both the solar and lunar eclipses. The duration of an eclipse is observed as a time for bathing, fasting, prayers etc. Pregnant women are warned against looking at an eclipse or cutting betel nuts, fruits, vegetables and fishes during an eclipse as these might affect the child and make him deformed. The Bunas of Bengal believe about the solar and the lunar eclipses that there is one *Rakshash* (demon) who is very powerful. But the thing is this that the *Rakhash* possesses a great hole in his throat. During eclipse that Rakshash gobbles the moon and that is why the earth is full of darkness. But as he has a big hole in his throat he cannot swallow it fully and the sun or the moon comes out

through the hole and that is why on eclipse the earth is in darkness for a short while and then sun or the moon reappears.

About the causes of the eclipse of the sun and the moon the Birhors of Chotanagpur believe that the sun and the moon stood security for the debts of the poor men. The creditors often send bailiffs to arrest the sun and the moon for the debts of those for whom they stood security. The Birhor mythology tells us that when the sun or the moon is seized by the bailiff there is a struggle, the sun or the moon is for a while partly or wholly concealed from view and they call it a solar eclipse or the lunar eclipse.

From the earliest upto the modern times the poets and the writers like Kalidas, Shakespears and others have depicted the moon as an ideal of physical beauty and glorified silvery cool radiance. To compare a moon with the beloved in loveliness and brightness is a common feature of the poets and the romantic writers. Some are so much attracted by the features of the moon that they are inclined to express the moon's majesty and loveliness, its changeability and inconsistency, and its influence on the human minds. Huxley has given his expression—"There is a soft moonlight that can give us peace that posses understanding. There is a moonlight that inspires a kind of awe. There is a cold and austere moonlight that tells the soul of its loneliness and desperate isolation, its insignificance or its uncleanliness. There is an amorous moonlight prompting to love—to love not only for an individual but sometimes even for the whole universe". Emerson was moved by the sight of the moon piercing through the clouds and wrote—"The man who has seen the rising moon break out of the clouds at midnight has been present like an archangel at the creation of the light and of the world". The changing phases of the moon have aroused various emotions in the minds of the poets. "Fair coquette of Heaven, to whom alone it has been given to change and be adored for ever", is a compliment given by Shelley. But to Juliet of Shakespeare the moon is not an object of adoration. Thus moon lore combines mystery and romance. The thieves and robbers, of course, do not like the moon for its shining light as this hampers their activity.

Thus the moon is endowed with a beauty and mystery by so many beliefs and legends. These will linger for countless years even after the man lands on it and makes for his habitation there. The moon still remains the *Chand Mama* or the maternal uncle Moon not only to the children of India but also elsewhere. When a child cries for the moon or sometimes refuses to drink milk or to take food the mother of the child consoles by uttering 'Oh moon, please come and put a mark

on the forehead of the child.'

About the moon the English doggerel runs—

"Hey diddle, diddle,
The cat and the fiddle,
The cow jumped over the moon,
The little dog laughed to see such sport,
And the dish ran away with spoon'

For many children who are in the dark about the astronomical ideas, the moon is really an enchanted realm, visited by all types of interesting people and also the scene of strange and magical events. The man in the moon looks out of the moon and says it is the time for all chidren on the earth to think about the moon. Some American doggerel about moon are :

I. "What's the news of the day,
Good neighbour, I pray ?
They say the balloon
Is gone up to the moon.

II. On Saturday night I lost my wife,
And where do you think I found her ?
Up in the moon, singing the tune,
And all the stars around her.

So for many, "touching the soul, directly, through the eyes and, indirectly along the dark channels of the blood", the moon will be a divinity.

Just a century ago Jules Verne in his book a trip to the moon, has explicitly explained his voyage to the moon without any astronomical calculations. His vision is today not a dream but a reality. Today such a fantastic voyage is not only technologically feasible ; it is imminent. Living at a distance of 240,000 miles from the earth the moon is gradually becoming earth's neighbour. The old traditional and mysterious ideas about the moon which were and even now are ingrained in the blood capillaries of the children, adults, poets, writers and all are on the way to change. Change is an inevitable one . and this requires time and space. That moment is approaching near and the whisperings of the universe that tell of wonderous and awe-some things. The day is near when a veil of mystery and romance of the moon will be open to all.

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*The author is glad to mention the names of his sons Malay Nath Basu and Basab Nath Basu for their assistances in relating some stories on Moon when whiling away their times in evening games.

SANKAR SEN GUPTA

SOCIO-CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS OF THE PEOPLE OF INDIA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO WOMEN

The first part of this article appeared in the previous issue of this journal as "Bengalee women in oral tradition". It will be continued in two more issues.

I

Anthropological Matrix

Indian anthropologists claim that man lived in India in the Paleolithic period. The first footfalls of man were heard in India probably from the foothills of the north-west Punjab towards the end of the First or in the Second Inter-glacial Age. Slowly through many millennia the descendants of early man evolved a culture which was spread here and there from the banks of the Soan in the north and Cauvery in the south. These were Palaeolithic men. These earliest inhabitants of our country had no acquaintance with metals and knew neither cultivation nor tening of cattle. As the centuries passed, man's knowledge advanced until, perhaps after thousands of years, the so-called Mesolithic Age was reached. This transitional stage in the development of primitive man is represented by microlithic relics which have been found in Narmada valley and the Deccan as well as in the Chotonagpur plateau and elsewhere in northern India. Then came the Neolithic or New Stone Age, the remains of which have been discovered in nearly all parts of India. Later in the New Stone Age, however, man seem to have built huts with the leaves and branches of trees. Gradually they acquired the art of spinning and weaving, but more often wore skins, barks and leaves. Indeed with the advent of the Copper Age we may date the beginning of civilization proper.[10]

Scholars assume that the first man was found in southern-central Asia. With the increase of population, men migrated to Europe, East Asia and Africa for food. This is assumed because it has been generally accepted that Europe is racially dependent on Asia and some racial elements are common to Africans and Asians. Many of them had been driven out from the Western side who ultimately took shelter in the southern regions. It is estimated by the specialists that

9. Bose, S. C. *Land and People of the Himalaya*, Indian Publications, Calcutta, 1968. It should be noted here that we have used 'Himalaya' instead of *Himalayas* following the suggestion of S. C. Bose.

10. Ghosal, H. R. An Outline History of the Indian People, New Delhi, Publication Division, 3rd print, 1966.

when the later immigrants came, India was already an inhabited place.[11]

The original inhabitants might have been completely absorbed by the newcomers or might have become extinct. The earliest racial elements were discovered from the skeltal remains at the chalcolithic sites of the Indus valley area.[12] Remains of Indus valley civilization prove that rice, wheat, barley and cotton were in cultivation in India then.

With the increase of population and problems of life and living gradually mankind becomes divided into what is popularly called as race. Some of the differences lie in the field of anatomy and some in physiology. But once the differences arise and become stabilized in time, they tend to persist. A close scrutiny of Indian people will disclose that India is not a land of homogeneous people but heterogeneity prevails here from the very early times.[13]

On the question of Indian races, we have till today, accepted the theory that from southern Asia men travelled to different regions of India and the world. Life in different climates, environment etc. compelled people to adopt different ways of living and taking different kinds of foods, wearing different kinds of dresses and so forth. This has also brought to a certain physical change which gave rise to different ethnic groups. It has already been said that from the prehistoric times Indian people are a product of intermixture of almost all the races of the modern world with some variation due to climatic and environmental conditions.[14] Of course, indiscriminate intermixing was not certainly the eternal rule.

It cannot be denied that sexual selection is instinctive in all animal world. Indiscriminate promiscuity might not have been absolutely unknown. These intermixed people were gradually conquered, absorbed or driven away to remote parts by subsequent immigrants and invaders. How far these forces resemble those races is an important aspect of study and this is being carried out by

11. Basu, M. N. "Land and People of India," lecture at the School of Humanistic and Cultural Studies in January, 1968 organised by the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture. Also published in the *Bulletin of RMIC*, Vol. XIX, No. 5, May, 1968.

12. Anthropological Survey of India, Memoir No. 8: *Peasant Life of India: A Study in Indian Unity and Diversity*, Calcutta, 1961.

13. Chandra, R. P. *Indo-Aryan Races: A Study of the Origin of the Indo-Aryan People and Institutions*, Varendra Research Institute, Rajsahi, (now in Pakistan). 1916.

14. Guha, B. S. *Racial Elements in the Population*, Oxford University Press, Bombay, 1944 and *Racial Affinities of the People of India*, 1931 census.

the Institute of Race Relations, London under the able guidance of Philip Mason,[15] its Director.

The Negroid elements, which according to some scholars came earliest in India, is nearly extinct. The earliest race which lived in India is indeterminable now. The proto-Australoids are found in distant parts in the hilly regions and jungles and the Mongoloid groups, not generally intermixed, live in the Himalayan ranges and in Assam and Burma frontiers. The Mediterraneans settled in the Indus valley. They and the Alpine groups are settled and intermixed in the northern Indian plains and in the Indus and Gangetic valleys.[16] The Nordic or proto-Nordic is scarely found in the Deccan excepting a very few in the central Indian region.[17]

Some racists maintain that the division of human society into different classes is the result of biological inequality and is due to natural selection. The theory of "higher" and "lower" race is ideological mask to conceal facts according to the anthropologists that belong to scientific materialist school.[18] The people belonging to a certain class possess certain racial features. The difference in height, however, has nothing to do with race. This difference is explained by the comsumption of better food. In a study of history of development of race and society one should not, therefore, encourage race struggle.

Needless to mention that in accordance with the general concept constant change is taking place in human body and society under the influence of social, economic, and natural factors and this has been substantiated with facts by the scholars like Schimdt and others. Apart from the question of changes in physical character, it is not yet properly known that the changes in the development of brain may be influenced by changes in climate and environments.[19]

There are scholars who regard racial pecularities as being those of a species even of genus, who allot those pecularities as exaggerated

15. Institute of Race Relations is an unofficial non-political body founded in England in 1958 to encourage and facilitate the study of relations between races everywhere.

16. Guha, B. S. op. cit. Also see Hadon, A. C. *The Wanderings of Peoples*, Cambridge, 1911, Risely, H. *The People of India*, Calcutta, 1915, Majumder D. N. Caste and Community in Indian village, Bombay 1958, Sarkar, S. S. "A Racial Classification of India", Bul. of ASI, X, 2, 1961 and Chatterjee, S. K. "Race Movements in Pre-historic Culture", The Vedic Age, ed. R. C. Majumdar, 1951.

17. Majumdar R. C. (Ed.) *The History and Culture of Indian Peoples*, Vols I-IV Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, 1951-60.

18. Nesturkh, M. *The Races of Mankind*, Progressive Publishers, Moscow Second Print, 1965.

19. Debets, G. F. *Principles of the Classification of the Races*, Moscow, 1965, Charles Darwin, *The Desent of Man and Selection in Relation in Sex*. London, 1901.

taxonomic significance and try to show that there are profound differences between one race to the other. In the opinion of these scholars, the races descended from different ancestors; this is the polygenetic theory of the origin of man. By ignoring facts they strive to show that the races of man are groups of people that differ very greatly in their morphological, physiological and psychological features and that they are not in any way related to one another or inimical to each other. When the supporters of such ideas admit the common origin of man, they maintain that there are "rapidly developing higher" races and "backward lower" races.[20] The former are doomed to subordination, slavery and extinction according to the scholars of this school.

So far as India is concerned it can be assumed that here an approximate idea of succession of the migrants has been made but it is impossible to determine from which particular race Indian races have come out.[21] There is a set of human relationships in which a sense of difference and a lack of communication are the dominant factors, but that does not fundamentally alter the nature of relationship.

Classification of races:

After the formation of races attempts to classify races from physical and other points of view are found. In this lead specialists observed the following four racial elements in India:

1. the proto-Australoid;
2. the Mediterranean;
3. the Mongolian; and
4. the Alpine.

All of them are found to be overlapping each other. There are no two opinions among the specialists that from the pre-historic time, as said before, population of India has been an intermixture of different races. Whether this intermixture was the effect of subsequent migration or invasions, or it had taken place before their entry to India or shortly after their entry, is very difficult to ascertain. It is also not possible to say whether there lived some particular race in any part of India at any particular period or time, because the anthropological researches in

20. Nesturkh, *The Origin of Man*, Foreign Language Publishing House, Moscow, 1959.

21. Vidyarthi, L. P. *Some Aspects of Applied Physical Anthropology* (Ed.) CSCR, Bihar, Ranchi, 1963.

India have not yet been completed and anthropologists too have not yet said their last word to that effect. So none should predict on what the future workers may add to our present day knowledge.

The people of different countries differ greatly from each other in colour of skin, hair, the type of hair, eyes, the shape of eyelids, nose, lips, face, head and in length of the body and its proportions. These features may vary among the people of one country, but a certain combination of them has a fairly stable hereditary character and that serves as a basis for classifying those who possess them as belonging to a particular race.[22]

Racial classification and description on philological basis was perhaps initiated by W. Jones through the Journal, Records and Monographs of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal. Racial classification from anthropometric point of view in India was first attempted by H. Risely in 1901 in the Census of British India. Prior to Risley, anthropometric measurements on the Indian people applied by Baron Mezokovesky von Ujfalvy, a Hungerian anthropologist in the Kashmir regions between 1879 and 1884 but his efforts were not received so widely.[23] After him came Stein, Dainelli, Guha and others. They carried extensive surveys, one after another, under the initiation of the then Government of India. Besides, somatic traits of Indian people was also available before Risely in Dalton's "Ethnology of Bengal", 1872, Wadell in 1901 took somatometric measurements on a number of Assamese tribes and a similar survey was conducted by E. Thurston on some tribes of Madras in 1909.

B

Risley[24] distinguished seven different ethnic types of Indian people. They are :—

The Turko-Iranian type : The people of this type have broad head, fine to medium nose, fair complexion, dark or grey and plentiful facial hair. The Balochis, the Bharauis and the Afgans come to this type.

The Indo-Aryan type : The people of this type have long head fine to medium nose, fair complexion, dark eyes with plentiful facial hair. The Punjabis, the Rajputs, the Jats and the Khattris of Kashmir are the people who belong to this type.

The Scytho-Dravidian type : Fair complexion with scanty facial hair, medium to broad head with medium nose are the features of this

22. Cheboksarov, N. N. "Fundamentals of Anthropological Classification" in the Symposium *The Origin of Man and the Ancient Migration of the Population.*

23. Basu, M. N. op. cit.

24. Risley, H. op. cit. *Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, 2 Vols.

type. The Brahmins of Maharastra and Coorg of Western India are typical examples of this type.

The Aryo-Dravidian or *Hindusthani type*: The head varying from long to broad, nose broad to medium, light brown to dark complexion are the features of this type. They are found in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Bihar.

The Mongolo-Dravidian or *Bengali type*: The complexion of the people of this type is dark with plentiful facial hair, head is broad with a tendency to medium, nose varies from fine to broad. This type is found in Bengal and Orissa.

The Mongoloid type. The head is broad, colour skin are dark with yellowish tinge, and the hair on the face is scanty. Stature is short or below medium, the face is characteristically flat, eye lids often oblique. The people of this type are found in Assam, Nepal, Himalayan range, Burma, NEFA and Nagaland.

The Dravidian type: The head of the people of this type is long, stature short or below medium, skin colour dark, hair is plentiful with an occasional tendency to curl, eyes are dark, nose is very broad but not so as to make the face a flat one. People of this type are found in Madras, Andhra Pradesh, Mysore and Kerala, and in the central parts of India and Chotonagpur plateau of Bihar. They are probably the original inhabitants of India now modified with the infiltration of the Aryan, Scythian and Mongoloid elements.[25]

C

After Risley many anthropologists have tried to classify Indian races but none could give a better and more scientific classification than B. S. Guha who revised the earlier accounts in 1931 Census. He made a classification which has been discussed and reclassified by the contemporary anthropologists,[26] but most of their classifications have not attained so much recognition in the scholarly world as that of Guha's. Thus, we have taken him and his study as the base point for the classification of Indian races here and it is expected that the justification of this classification is substantiated by what is said above.

The first type according to this classification is the Negrito.

25. Risley, op. cit.

26. Though the racial classification has been one of the most obscure areas of Indian ethnography, anthropologists see India's population as forming basically one race with varying substocks or at best two races. See Keith, 1936, Hooton, 1946, Coon et al 1950, Boyd, 1954 Von Eickstedt, 1935, Guha, 1935-44, Sarkar, 1954 and others.

The Negrito: Different scholars have different views about the existence of the Negrito strain in population of India. The scholars who hold Negrito existence in India say that Negrito people are found in Andaman Islands, hilly regions of the Bay of Bengal and Malay peninsula. Kadirs of South India are said to belong to Negrito strain. Much attention to Negrito problem was given by a great many scholars. J. H. Hutton says that there is Negrito substratum in the population of Eastern Frontier. Comenting on a section of the Nagas, he says that the Sema Nagas are very much ugly[27] to look at. They live in NEFA, Nagaland, Manipur and Assam. Giuffrida-Ruggeri maintains the pre-existence of Negritos between India and Persian gulf. S. S. Sarkar has found a broad headed youngman with woolly hair among the tribals of the Rajmahal hills of Bihar and he claims the origin of this tribe as Negrito.[28] The recent researches provide fact that the Negrito element in Indian population is sporadic one which may be explained genetically.[29]

The proto-Australoid: Perhaps the second immigrants were proto-Australoid or the pre-Dravidians. It is not certain whether the people of this group were the original inhabitants in India. Some scholars are of the opinion that the Nishads which are mentioned as a "lower" caste people in India's traditional literature are the representatives of this group.[30] They are also known as the Santals, the Oraon, the Mundas, the Chenchus, the Kurumbas, the Bhils, etc. in the present day. The great affinities of these people in skin colour, head-form, hair-type with the Veddas of Ceylon and the Australian indicate the term given to the people of this type.

The Mongoloid: The people of this group perhaps reached India through north-eastern gate who are still found in north-eastern parts of country. They have flat face with prominent cheek bones. The long headed tribes of this group are again subdivided as the palaeo-Mongoloid. And the broad headed people among them found in

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27. About the women of Sema Nagas J. H. Hutton observes "Among women, however, ugliness is a rule: A pretty Sema girl is hardly to be found, though the exceeding plainness of majority of the sex makes the few who are less ill-favoured sometime seen almost pretty by comparison. The women generally are very short, squal and hoary handed.....In fact, breads among men are about as rare as beauty in women (The Sema Nagas, New Edn. 1968).

28. Sarkar, S. S. *The Mullers of Rajmahal Hills*, Calcutta, 1938.

29. Sarkar, R. M. *Fundamentals of Physical Anthropology*, Post-Graduate Book, Calcutta, 1965.

30. Bose, N. K., *Hindu Samajer Garan* (In Bengali, The Structure of Hindu Society), Visva-Bharati, Calcutta 1356 B. S.

Sikkim, Bhutan etc. are known as the Tibeto-Mongoloid. It is said to be main tribal population of India.

The Mediterranean : The people of this type have again divided into three distinct sub-types by Guha. Dark skin, long head with high vault, medium stature, etc. are distinguished character of the palaeo-Mediterranean who are found among the Telugu and Tamil Brahmins. The Mediterranean type is also representated by the people of Maharastra, Madhya Pradesh and especially the Brahmins of Allahabad, (Uttar Pradesh) Nambudri Brahmin of Kerala and a few among the Bengali Brahmins. The *Oriental* or the *Semetic type* resembles the Mediterranean except in rare formation. Banias of Rajasthan, Chhatri of Uttar Pradesh and Punjab belong to this type. Possibly the people of this type are responsible for Indus valley civilization according to some scholars.

Western Brachycephals or *Alpo-Dinaric* : The people of this type are the Kathi of Kathiawar, the Banias of Gujarat and the Kayasthas of Bengal. Perhaps this type moved from southern Baluchisthan, through Sindh, Kathiawar, Gujarat, Maharastra to Mysore, Tamilnad and Ceylon along the Ganges of Bengal. The latest researches on ethnology say that the major racial strain of Bengal and Maharastra belong to this group and they have seperately named this group as Homo-Alpinus or Lapouge. The Kinami sub-type is very marked in Bengal, Orissa and Coorg. The Karnataki Brahmins, and Bengali Brahmins also belong to this group. The Armenian type has tawny skin, short to medium stature, broad head etc. The Parsis are the true representatives of this sub-type. The existence of this sub-type is not rare among the Vaidyas and Kayasthas of Bengal according to some scholars.

The Nordic : The people of this type came to India from North. Later, the name "Aryan" was applied to certain people of this group who are tall, and with fair complexion. Tall, blue-eyed blonds of modern North Europe are "true" Nordic Aryans. Their racial dominance is not so great but they are scattered all over the country. The word 'Nordic', let us remember in this connection, is taken from German 'Nord' (North) and from this comes the terms Nordism, Nordist etc. The American anthropologists are very much eager to prove Yankees as the pure-blooded higher race or Nordic Aryans.[31]

The beginning of the scientific study of man and woman have started when individual scholars attempted to survey the rapidly

31. Nesturkh, M. op. cit.

increasing amount of ethnographic data gathered by travellers, missionaries and others. Leaving the library to go into the field was a step in this direction. It is only when individuals went into the field to study a people, scientific approach to anthropology, sociology, folklorology began to develop. The social structure in general and the study of kinship groups and terminology etc. in particular has challenged the imagination of social scientists times without number. The ways in which human groups are organised and the implications of such systems of organisation continue to remain the principal area of socio-biological inquiry and analysis.

II

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Caste :

One part of the study of social organization concerns castes. Then come family and marriage. It is not easy to define caste in India which is dominated by the Hindus. The division of ancient Hindu society into four castes developed into a very complicated pattern of sub-castes and sub-groups within each sub-caste (*gotras*) etc. this giving rise to one of the most peculiar and elaborate hierachies in the world. The shameful feature of this whole system is the existence of 'untouchables' referred to as Scheduled Castes in the Constitution of India and termed as Harijans by Mahatma Gandhi.

An examination of the settlement pattern of the Indian population shows that most people live in communities in villages or towns. They are caste-ridden. Apparently, the caste system is as old as reincarnation in Indian life. The members of each caste perform social and essential services for the rest of the community. The Indian village is an organic whole in which caste specialists work together to shape a common life. But this is not the entire story. Members of any particular caste found to live near one another, join one another in ritual, observances and maintain their social status. A man marries within his caste and collaborates with other caste members in performing their particular service to village life. Together with members of his caste, he meets to discuss the problems and conditions of the caste work. Thus, our folk people are united by work and marriage, and seperated by sacred prescriptions from member of other castes.

This caste system is an institution that has no parallel anywhere in the world to our knowledge. It has its origin in a system of

division of labour which came into being shortly after the invasion of the Aryans into India. Originally, there were four castes—Brahman, Kshitriya, Vaishya and Sudra. The Brahmins began to make their living as vegetarians. This led to the emergence of the second social class, viz., the Kshatriyas. Although these people did not possess the intellectual abilities of the Brahmins yet they possessed the physical abilities required of one present day military men. The Kshatriyas faught hard. They lived on flesh of animals for food, used the skin of the animals for clothing, and the branches of trees for shelter. The Vaishya community had a business outlook. It was the custom of those times to take Brahmins on cow-backs in processions in order to be respected and admired by the rest of the communities. Circumstances did not warrant the Vaishyas to resort themselves to non-vegetarian. The Sudras did not possess the necessary abilities for any of the activities of the Brahmins, the Kashtriyas or the Vaishyas. They performed menial jobs which gifted people won't have performed in normal circumstances. These divisions of castes have now been divided with a number of ethnic, kin and religious groups, such as, the Brahmans, Vaidyas, Kayasthas, Vaishnabs, and so on in Bengal.

How the folk people have accepted the caste groups and how they enter into conflicts may be gleaned from the following Bengali sayings :

I. *kalir bamun dhora saap, je na mare tar pap.* a man commits a sin if he does not beat a Brahmin in this Iron Age (Kaliyuga).

II. *bamun badal ban dakshina pelei jan.* The Brahmin, cloudy weather and the flood go wherever they get fee.

III. *baidya barendra bora tin naster gora* Vaidya, Barendra Brahmin and boa constrictor, these three are evil minded.

IV. *kayet, kalo saap, bedo nari tinjanke parihari.* The Kayastha, the black snake and the gypsy woman—these three are to be avoided

V. *jat khoyalei bostom.* As soon as you loose your caste you become a Vaishnav by religion.

VI. *nere nai isti tetul nai misti.*[32] The Muslims are never desirable, tamarind is never sweet.

Unlike other systems of division of labour the caste system of India was one in which entry into profession was not determined by choice but decided by the fact of one's birth. Those belonging to a

32. Quoted from Dey, S. K.'s *Bangla prabad*, (Bengali Provevrbs, 1st. edn. Ranjan Publishing House, Calcutta, 1352 B.S.

particular caste intermarried with the caste and thus these groups become highly exclusive, bound together by all kinds of social ties and fenced off from all others. In a recent study in the four Midnapur villages P. K. Bhowmick observes that "In respect of hierarchial status of the castes concerned, it may be said that Brahman remains at the top having an esteemed social rank. Next in order, is the Kayastha, scribes, claiming a status just after the Brahmans which is more or less correlated with the Kshatriya of traditional Hindu social structure. The Sadgops claim their position after Kayasthas i.e. in the same alignment. The Brahmans take water and cooked food in *ghee*, but not boiled rice both from the Kayasthas and Sadgops. Next in order is the Barbar or *Napit* and Blacksmith or *Kamar*, who belong to Nabasyak group with status of pure Sudra, Brahman can take water, fruits and uncooked food from their hands. Next come 'unclean' castes, who are neither despised nor esteemed, but claim some social status. The Jugis (Nath of Saiva Sect) belong to this group."[33] The ritual life of each caste is generally conducted by Brahmans, and varies a little in observance from each other. But some women of lower caste people who are generally known as *Jalachal* (the people from whom the Brahman can'ot take water) when the next group is known as *Jalchal* (the people from whom the Brahman take water) both may attend the houses of all the caste groups irrespective of *Jalchal, Jalachal* and higher castes like Brahmans, Vaidyas, Kayasthas etc. during delivery time and cut the umbilical cords of the new born for which they get due remunaration. These women are traditional obstericians and they work within their own circle—a definite number of households which they get by inheritence. These women are popularly known as *daima*. Of course, the people who are economically sound do

১। কলির বামুন ধোড়া সাপ, যে না মারে তার পাপ (১০২২)
২। বামুন, বাদল, বান, দক্ষিণা পেলেই যান (৪১৮৭)
৩। বৈদ্য বারেন্দ্র বোরা তিন নষ্টের গোড়া (৪৪৪৪)
৪। কাগেত কালো সাপ বেদোনাবী তিন জনকে পরিহরি (১২২০)
৫। জাত খোয়ালেই বোষ্টম (২৪৮৭)
৬। নেড়ে নয় ইষ্টি তেঁতুল নয় মিষ্টি (৩৪৪৭)
৭। নাপিত বৈদ্য, ধোপা চোর, যুগী বৈরেগীর নেইক ওর। (৩৩৩৭) and
৮। বামুন মুহুদ্দি ধোপা, গোমস্থা, এদের নেই কোন বুদ্ধি-বাবস্থা (৪১৮২)
৯। গরুর মধ্যে এঁড়ে জাতের মধ্যে নেড়ে
খাওয়ালে দাওয়ালেও মরে তেড়ে॥ (১৭০৯)
১০। আগে থাকে উচ্চাটন্না পরে হয় উচ্চিন।
তলের মহম্মদ উপরে যায় কপাল ফেরে যদ্দিন। (২১০)

33. Bhowmick, P. K. "Four Midnapore Villages" In the District Census Hand Book, Vol. II, 1961, Calcutta, 1968.

not miss to avail themselves of a hospital or a clinical facilities for such an occasion.

It is well-known that caste, as is said above, is something other than class or status group. It is characterised by the following predominant features :

(i) endogamy ;

(ii) traditional bound occupation ;

(iii) hierarchal grading based on certain notion or ritual purity.

It is a rule of the caste that every member should marry within the caste or sub-caste.[34] Each caste again have a hereditary fixed occupation. Many castes are known by their occupational pursuits.* Certain castes are more occupationally specialised, others more occupationally generalized. In addition, there is often a nebulous group of occupations which are open to nearly castes.

In an occupationally diversified society like ours, the greater the economic specialization, the greater will be the dependance of one group upon another. That caste system is an organised system to regulate society on actual differences and an ideal unity is born out of it. It is a system of interrelationship peculiar to the 'pan-Indian civilization'. Equally important was the division of an Aryan's life into four *ashramas* (stages)—*brahmacharya*, (students' stage) *garhasthya* (householder's stage) *Vanaprastha* (recluse's stage) and *sannyasa* (renunciation). It was, however, more an ideal than something obligatory. Later, it gradually grew into *Varna*[35] or

34. While accepting the position that caste exclusiveness has been substantially reduced, it should not be overlooked that food and social taboos have not been affected to the same degree among different castes or in the same castes in different areas. It should be noted here that the "word 'caste' can be used to denote two sociologically distinct entities. One is a group of interacting members ; the other is named a population, often widely dispersed, whose members are aware that they belong to it and thereby have specific kind of relationships with other people.' A. C. Mayer "Caste and Local Politics in India and Ceylon" : Unity and Diversity, Oxford, 1967.

*For a better knowledge of caste-structure and occupation change please see Sankar Sen Gupta's "Some Thoughts on Anthropological Market Studies", *Human Events*, Vol. III. No. 3, March, 1969 and the book "Occupational Mobility and Caste Structure in Bengal" by P. K. Bhowmick, Calcutta, Indian Publications, 1969.

35. *Varna* or colour in the sense of pigment of skin or ethnic origin was undoubtedly a factor of primary importance in early Vedic polity. Aryan and the dark skinned aboriginals called *dasas* or *dasyus*. The high flown Aryans of the Rigveda representing probably the earliest epoch of Indo-Aryan history never forgets that his own colour is distinct from that of the *dasas*.

We have two broad group on the basis of ethnic and at the same time cultural differences, in the same *purusa*. The Brahmana was his mouth, the Rajayana was made his armour ; the Vaisya constituted his thigh ; the Sudra sprang

colour then into a complete *Jati-division*. In the former period the correlation between caste the occupation was not rigid but later stricter laws were enforced. There is evidence that in the past indiscrimination matting was not infrequent but later intracaste marriage was forbidden. In villages, due to the permanent type of settlement patterns, the villagers live in close proximity and in close contacts with day-to-day affairs. In this way, they develop a sort of social relationship among different kin-groups and caste-groups. Consequently, intervillage relationship becomes indispensible in which almost all castes and communities take active part and on which man-to-man relationship is based. This is a case for relaxation of traditional practices. In marriage, birth, funeral observences and other social gatherings this relationship is extended to the caste members of the different places.[36] In this context we will also touch on the

allegory. The Brahman acted as the vocal organ of the comunity as chanting; the Rajayana employed his strong arms in defending his country and people; the tillers and traders or Vaisyas were mainstay of society as the thighs are of the human body, the Sudras had to make large use of their feet in moving about for a due performance of their plebian duties.

Let us quote C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar who says that

"Renascent India has to reorient its ideas with reference to the original significance of *Varnashrama*, namely, that it was not originally rigid or inflexible or based on solely heredity. The Great Sri Krishna asserted:

Chathurvarnyam maya srishtam
guna karma vibhagashah

(For four *varnas* were created by Me according to disposition or tendency and also according to heredity apitudes). A Brahmana is not born a Brahmana, a Brahmana is Brahmana if he evolved within himself the "gun" of a true Brahmana, the 'karma' of a true Brahmana. That was the whole idea, underlying idea, of *varnas* and *ashramas*".

The caste division is justified because it has been created on the basis of their possession of three basic virtues, namely 'satya' 'raja' and 'tama'. These three are dominant and not exclusive characters, and there are all sorts of permutations and combinations.

Since we cannot determine in each individual case what the aptitudes of the individuals are, hereditary and training are used to fix the calling.

36. M. K. Gandhi urges that the ideas of caste is the right path to social harmony. He said, "I believe that caste has saved Hinduism from disintegration. But like every other institution it has suffered from excrescences I consider the four divisions alone to be fundamental, natural and essential. The innumerable subcastes are sometimes a convenience, often a hindrance. The sooner there is fusion the better. The silent destruction and reconstruction of subcastes have ever gone on and are bound to continue. Social presure and public opinion can be trusted to deal with the problem. But I am certainly against any attempt at destroying the fundamental divisions. The caste system is not based on inequality, there is no question of inferiority, and so far as there is any such question arising, the tendency should undoubtedly be checked, there appears to be no valid reason for

paatern of Indian family. But here it should be remembered that the pattern of caste in the twentieth century differ from that of the nineteenth or its earlier centuries.

The cultural[37] aspect of man and society may lead one to understand aspect of caste and racial affinities. Anthropologists provide us with numerous facts that there are definite evidence against the concept that culture is created only by some "higher" races. Some racists, it should be remembered, make the level of cultural development upon the greater size of brain. They consider the "white" race to be the higher and the "coloured" race to be the lower. They say, higher races are active and play a leading role in history and civilization while the lower races play a subordinate roles.[38] One of the most convincing refutations of this concept of greater size of brain is the development of high level of culture among the ancient Egyptians. According to the data placed by the German anthropologist, E. Schimdt, the volume of Egyptian male cranium was 1.394 c.c. and that the female cranium 1.257 c.c. which are less than the average of their neighbouring peoples and this is well-known to the anthropological world. But these Egyptians were far greater in cultural level than that of their neighbours who had greater size of brain.[39] This is also the case with the higher caste and lower caste people. In relation to race and caste

ending the system because of its abuse. It lands itself easily to reformation (Gandhi, Young India, 1921, in N K. Bose's Selections from Gandhi, (ed) Navajivan Trust, 1948).

37. One reason for studying culture is to make the unconscious conscious Anthropologists agree that "without concrete, actual behavior, there would obviously be no patterns of behavior, but nevertheless the majority do persist in distinguishing "culture" from "behavior" .....Those who argue that culture constitutes a level of reality unto itself, that is, those who advocate what is called a superorganic conception of culture, are convinced that man is a helpless victim of cultural forces . Although the organic (e.g. man) is composed of inorganic elements (e.g chemicals) the organic is more than the sum of its inorganic constituents. In other words, if you put all the chemical constituents of man together, you don't get man. Man, the organic, depends upon the inorganic, but he is not completely reducible to inorganic principles. By analogy, superorganicists argue that culture (the superorganis) is more than simply a sum total of men (organic constituents). It depends upon men—it could not exist without them but it is allegedly not reducible to a purely organic basis. Culture as a level of reality operates in accordance with its own rules.. ... Cultural relativists insist that patterns of human behavior are relative to individual cultures. Yet within any one individual culture, the anthropologist has tended to emphasize similarties rather than differences. Perhaps this is why the discipline is called *cultural* anthropology." Alan Dundes in "Every Man His Way" Readings in Cultural Anthropology, Univ. of California, Berkely, Calif., 1968.

38. Nesturkh, M. op. cit.

39. Ibid.

Following is a measurements (in mm of Mohenjodaro Crania exacavated during

one should note that culture has nothing to do with racial features or caste position but it is determined mainly by social and economic factors.

So far as India is concerned the earlier inhabitants were in the long run affected by the new culture of immigrants inspite of great differences between them. The Rigveda describes the non-Aryans as a dark, dwarfish, snub-nosed and ill-favoured people, reveals them also as *Dasas* (slaves) or *Dasyus*. But in course of time racial antagonism between the two subsided and intermarriage took place between free Aryans and enslaved non-Aryans, though aristocrats still looked upon racial intermixture with disfavour.

Culture is the product of intellectual capacities and mental tendencies and they are present in both the higher and lower caste people. The people who are economically sound either in the higher or in the lower castes get incentives and encouragements for their development when the poor class, most of whom come from the lower caste people, do get no patronization or incentive for developing themselves inspite of their endevour after endeavour. But no doubt a fact that due to mass contact and better communication certain cultures are found to exist in some areas. We know that the early Vedic age ended round about 1100 B. C. The next five hundred years, which may be described as later Vedic period, show all-round development among the Aryans. During the period Aryan penetration of the east and south from the middle continued. Comparatively distant terri-

1927-29. This is quoted from Dr. S. S. Sarkar :—

Measurements Skull no	M. 27	M. 28	M. 32	M. 40
Sex	Male	Male	Child	Female
Max. cranial length	187	196	166	180
Max cranial bredth	136	134	122	-
Length-breadth inxed	72.73	68.37	73.49	--
Auricular height	119	124	124	
Basion-bregma height	—	—	134	—

and the following is the sexual variation in cranial index where shows that the females have a higher average cranial index than males.

	Tape Hissar	*Harappa*	*Chuhra*
Male	70.8	71.66	70.66
Female	72.8	72.98	72.34
Difference	2.0	1.32	1.68

Source : *Ancient Races of Baluchistan, Punjab and Sindh*, Bookland Calcutta. 1964.

tories such as Vasali, and Videha were brought within the Aryan pale and gradually Magadha and Anga, the Andhra country in the Godavari valley and the Wardha region were partially colonized where there were non-Aryan people or mixed races. The extension of Aryan cultural sway was accompanied by the rise of mighty Kingdoms and the growth of royal power in general. Koshala, Kasi, Videha, Kuru and Panchal, among others reached a position of unquestioned pre-eminence. Complexities developed in later Vedic society. The division of society tended to become water-tight. Men of higher classes were permitted to marry women of lower orders, but social stigma seems to have attached to those who contracted marriage with Sudras.

The rise of a number of castes on occupational basis was a noteworthy development and was the result of spliting up of the Vaisya and Sudra communities into groups. The various localised castes are found packed together in close compartments, and sometimes these castes in a particular alignment, demand a somewhat higher or same status, and in between them, certain amount of flexibility is always allowed. In economic sphere, the function of caste is generally non-competitive. In course of various interactional phases and due to closer social contacts, many changes are taking place, from time to time, and place to place. Consequently a good deal of social mobility is noticed amongst many groups of people or castes in attempting to raise their social status.

While dealing with caste and race, language is a point. Practically, the language of the people of superior culture is gradually accepted by the opposite group in course of time and this we have seen in the case of Aryans and non-Aryans. The story of Aryan expansion indeed is not merely a narrative of heroic exploits; it is in the main a story of extention of their culture. Then there is religion. In this field, as indeed in several other spheres, the conquerors' civilization owes a great deal to the conquered. The religious practices vary in different caste groups even inspite of their following one religion. Then there is folk religion which is secular in nature. We shall discuss language and religion of India in the appropriate places. Prior to that we shall place an outline of the family, marriage, and society. In the following section we will place a note about the Indian family which is the paradise for Indian womanhood.

Family :

The family morphology consists of house, history, number and generations of people in it, the education and property of the family

members. The physiography of the family consists of social, political, religious and economic functioning.

Family was the basic unit in the early Aryan society. A group of families formed a *grama* (village). Great importance was attached to the increase of male population. Polygamy was not unknown but rare, while polyandry was non-existent.

The traditional family system in India is joint-family. It is patriarchal. Here the relation between the head of the family and others is marked by filial love and not by fear. He enjoys wide power and authority.[40] The old patriarchal family had transformed itself into a joint-family whose head managed the property in the interest of all the members of the family. There was growing tendency towards the disintegration of the joint-family into individual family and the old patriarchal tradition was utilized to fortify the joint-family. The corpus of the joint-family was further strengthned by other devices because tradition alone cannot keep up for long a distintegrating structure[41] and all these have been very efficiently treated by K. M. Kapadia in his study of marriage and family.

A traditional Indian family is composed of the father, mother, grand-father, grand-mother, sons, daughters, grand-sons and daughters etc. members of 3 to 4 generations where parents' aunts, uncles etc. may also reside together Widowed, divorced or otherwise ill-fated sisters or relatives may also be the members of the joint-family. But owing to changes of outlook, values, economic condition and industrialisation as well as problematic factors of life, the traditional joint-family system is either getting a break or taking its new form.[42] Some say, it is due to the influence of western culture but facts are contrary. The traditional joint family is undergoing rapid changes as a metter of course, and it is being replaced by a simpler structure viz. non-joint-family.

In order to understand the changes in the concept of family it is necessary to examine the roles of different relatives in different spheres of social life which we will see later. Prior to that it is important to note that the history of the joint-family unfolds one significant fact. It is that even when the trends towards individualism were recognised attempts were made to harmonize them with the interest of the joint-family. Indian sentiments are even today in favour of a joint-family.[43]

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40 Kapadia, K. M. *Marriage and Family in India*, Third Edition, 1966 Oxford University Press, Bombay.

41. Ibid.

42. Lakshminarayan, H. D. "Joint Family in India," *Folklore*, March, 1966.

43. Ibid.

As a matter of fact all Hindus, who form the majority of India's population, do not follow the Brahminic pattern of marriage and family and hence family patterns of the Hindus as a whole, not only differ in details, but, to a certain extent, even in principle. The joint-family has lost its characterestic elements to a large extent these days.[44] Now, a man may live seperately or he can establish his own seperate kitchen in the same house without affecting his interest in the corporancy of property. He may decline to join the family worship and many other details and yet he does not on that account lose his status as a member of the joint-family.[45]

The structure of joint-family depends upon the way in which conflicts on economic and the ideological plains with the modern family are resolved. Many of the economic obligations are resisted by members of the joint-family. All the members of a joint-family do not earn, and many of those who earn not only refuse to pool their earnings but do not accept even their responsibilities to contribute adequetely to family disbursements.[46] This brings conflicts and quarrels and consequently break old joint-family. These conflicts and quarrels are abundent in folklore which we will see later.

A joint-family is joint as long as members of 3 to 4 generations live together with their wives and children under one roof, eat food cooked in one hearth, hold property in common, and have common religious functions. This big joint-family is being split into small joint or non-joint families. It becomes joint-family in course of time after the marriage of the son and the joint-family becomes non-joint after the split to become joint again.[47] Thus, a family may undergo changes without any break or it may break into different types by which the steam of family vanishes. For instance, a big joint-family may change into collateral joint-family of brothers after the death of parents, or it may break into smaller joint or non-joint families. In the former, a family changes into a different one after the death of parents without any split, in the later, a family breaks into different types by split. We, therefore, cannot say that the joint-family is vanishing by the death of parents. The original family does not vanish but changes by the parents' death. The son's non-joint family becomes joint after son's marriage. In this way, the type of family goes on changing over years in a 'rhythmic' manner.[48]

44. Kapadia, K. M. op. cit.
45. Ibid. 46. Ibid.
47. Lakshminarayan, H. D. "Inner Dynamics of the Joint Family," *Folklore*, Vol. VIII, no. 11, November, 1967.
48. Ibid.

It is possible to classify the joint-family in the following three types. First, the lineal joint-family. This is constituted by a man, his married son, unmarried children, married son's children etc. The second type is lineal and lateral joint-family, composed of a man, his wife, his brothers and their wives and married children with all their children. We may call the third type as collateral joint-family where two or more brothers live together with or without the widowed mother. To these three types of family a fourth one may be added. That is non-joint family, which consists of a man, his wife or children with or without.[49]

None of the above types remains the same during the life time of an individual. A joint-family changes into a non-joint family with the death of the parents, or to a lineal and lateral joint-family with the marriage of two or more sons. This lineal and lateral joint-family may change either into collateral joint-family by the death of parents or may split into many lineal joint and or non-joint families by partition. The non-joint family may again become lineal and lateral joint-family. H. D. Lakshminarayan has ably discussed the dynamics of the Hindu joint-family in different essays in "Folklore" and in other journals.

The family forms may also be classified according to relative status of the male and that of the female. These forms are of three classes—(1) Matrilineal (2) Patrilineal and (3) Companionship.[50]

Then the families can be sub-divided into different class groups. The dominant classes of families in a capitalist society will have more upper-income groups than the lower-income group people. These classes do not exist in socialist society. Their relative strength and sub-grouping vary from one society to another. The total strength of each class of the family and its sub-grouping determine the organisation and functioning of a society, and the relative strength of different classes of the family determines the character of the society.

Let us be optimistic and assume that the involved problem on marriage and family will be solved by synthesis. That would open a way to obtain energy from classless society, but there is a limit to how much the aggregate capacity of classless society can grow under the present socio-economic-politico condition of the country. To put the question in another way—why assume that man's progress has to depend on the continual expansion of productive forces? Perhaps qualitative changes will enter the picture. Not being a philosopher it can be said that any society whose productive forces do not improve in quantity as well as in quality is bound to be doomed. Let us estimate

49. Ibid.
50. Ibid.

whether Indian society can provide productive and united force taking her womenfolk as a model. Because now-a-days women have come out of closed doors to help men and take an equal share of burden of life. They have come to realize that they are self-reliant and are able to earn an honest livelihood by sweat of the brow. Man and woman live the same life, have the same feelings. Each is a complement of the other. One cannot live without the other's active helps. It is nothing but engenic fitness, because the begetting of offspring being the central purpose of marriage, "engenic fitness cannot be treated merely as a 'condition', it is the *sine qua non* of marriage' said Gandhiji. And according to Westermark 'marriage is rooted in family.'

Marriage :

In theory, communities restrict marriage to their own group ; in practice, marriage is limited to even smaller groups. Castes are governed by their own organization of authority. In many parts of India, particularly in north, political and economic changes have destroyed the ancient manner of managing internal and local affairs among the castes. But where ruin has not overtaken the system there appears to be a greater similarity between northern and peninsular forms of organization in the field of material traits.

Marriage is a very important event in the life of a woman. Matrimony, in course of time, followed by maternity, and its recurrence makes the woman periodically helpless and absolutely dependent on her husband for sometime. Marriage, therefore, determines the fate of a woman to a much greater extent than it does the destiny of a man.[51] The marriage has been classified as (i) Monogamous ; (ii) Polygamous and (iii) Polyandrous.[52] The monogamous family exists where the means of income are almost equally owned or equally open to males and females ; where main means of income belong to male only and where the means of income are scarce and solely belongs to male, the polyandrous family exists there. The second type or polygamous family comes into existence for some other reasons which we will see later.

It is necessary to remember here that there are eight traditional forms of Hindu marriage. They are : (1) the Brahman form (2) the Prajapatya form (3) the Ashram form ; (4) the Daiva form ; (5) the

51. Altekar, A. S. *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilization*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 3rd edn. 1962.

52. Prasad, Ayodhya, *The Basis of Society*, Popular Prakasan, Bombay, 1967.

Gandharva form (6) the Asura form ; (7) the Rakshasa form ; and (8) the Paisacha form.[53]

In the first form, the father of the maiden himself invites and receives with honour the bridegroom and gives his daughter, decking her with ornaments. It has been considered as the best as well as holiest of all forms of traditional Hindu marriage. The second or the next form is that by which the father of the maiden while giving his daughter in marriage addresses the bridegroom with the words, "Perform your religious duties together with her." In the third form the father of the girl receives a dress and a bull with a cow from the bridegroom in the marriage of his daughter. This cattle pair is not bride-price, it is only a matter of form.[54] In the fourth form, while performing a sacrifice a father gives away his daughter to the officiating priest owing to the absence of the selected person. The fifth one is that form of marriage where the maiden and a man who desires each other, meet their union. In the sixth form of marriage, a father of a bride takes money from the bridegroom as her price. Next form is considered where a man forcebly abducts a maiden and bounds to marry her. The last or the eighth form is sexual intercourse with a maiden during her sleep or while she is unconscious. It is the worst form of marriage according the Hindu idea.[55]

The aims of Hindu marriage are said to be *dharma* (religion) *praja* (progeny) and *rati* (pleasure). Though sex is one of the functions of marriage it is given the third place in Hindu marriage system.[56] Hindu marriage is a sacrament. It is considered sacred because it is said to be complete only on the performance of the sacred rites accompained by the sacred formulae. Hindu marriage demands of personal gratification and pleasures are subordinated there. The individual is called upon to make marriage a succeess by means of compromise and adjustment. The concept of marriage is a lofty one because it means that the husband and wife after marriage have to adjust their tastes and temper, their ideals and interests, instead of breaking with each other when they find that these differ.[57] It thus, involves sacrifices on the part of the both the husband and the wife as each called upon to overcome to incompatibility of the other.

53. Indradeva, Shrirama *Social Philosophy of Later Smritis*, Unpublished thesis submitted for Ph.D. at the University of Rajasthan in 1967 (Manuscript).

54. ibid.

55. ibid.

56. Kapadia, K. M. op. cit.

57. यदेतद्धृदयं तव तदस्तु हृदयं मम ।
यदेतद्धृदयं मम तदस्तु हृदयं तव ॥ सामसन्त्र ब्राह्मण १. ३. ९.

Woman has been considered weak, impure and probably a lower creature because of menstruation. She feels weakness during her period of mensturation. It is affirmed that anybody who touches her, will suffer similarly. Any contact with a woman during her menstruation period is considered to polluting. Parasara says that on the first day of her menstruation a woman is *chandali* (outcaste), on the second day, she is *brahmahatyakarini* (murderer of Brahmana), on the third day she is *rajakini* (a washer woman) and on the fourth day she is *sudhbacharini* (i.e. becomes pure)[58]

The Hindu law-giver suggested that the girls would be given in marriage before their mensturation begins. The idea behind this law is probably to give a girl who is pure and holy, and by the menstruation girls get impure, this impurity may cause some obstruction in obtaining desired success. It is interesting to note an ancient myth in this connection which is available in *Taittiriya Samhita* (2/5/1). Lord Indra once slew *Visvarupa*, the priest of the gods, because he had stealthily allowed the demons to take part in *yajna*. Women agreed to have taken on themselves one-third of the sin of *brahmahatya* (murder of Brahmana) in return of the blessing which enables them to become mothers after the mensturation period. Thus, it is clear from the allusion found in the verse that woman's menstruation period is related to some sin.[59] The polluting effect of a woman in this stage is therefore supported and justified.

No women can be pregnant without passing through the mesturation period. And it is mentioned in some ancient literature that if a girl is not given marriage even after passing three menstruation period, she is free to choose her own partner in life. As long as she manstruates she is not considered capable of doing domestic work or having relations with her husband. But the mensturation taboo is not followed by a large number of women of the sophisticated society in India. The tribal and the lower caste women of different parts break this taboo owing to economic reason ; so with the modern sophisticated girls, and working women, who engage themselves in various types of activities during that period.

Despite the fact that marriage was considered to be irrevocable, the two partners were not regarded as being equals in their obligations and privileges. There are obvious discrimination made in their responsibility towards each other and in responsibility for sustaining the marriage. The ideal of *pativrata* (being devoted to the husband) is the only duty of the wife according to Hindu idea and her main pur-

58. Indradeva, Shrirama, op. cit.
59. ibid.

pose in life is planned accordingly.[60] Naturally, then, on the death of the husband the wife had either to live chastely, renouncing all the joys of life or to follow her husband by immolating herself with his body in the pyre. This ideal of *pativrata,* propagated by the orthodox Hindus, is as old as Hindu religion. It gave rise to and glorified the practice of *sati* or immolation. With the passing of time the idea of *pativrata* became so deep rooted in the mind of the Hindu women that immolation became not only customery but a woman's highest aspiration and this can be substantiated quoting folklore. Then it got rigid and many inhuman elements crept into it which we shall discuss later.

The notoriety of the exponents of *sati* went so far as to distort a particular *Sukta* of *Rigveda* (10. 18. 7) and use it for their evil purpose. The distoration was made only of a word, but it killed thousands of young widows in India. In the original it runs as "Arohantu Janayo *Yonimagre*", but the propagators of *sati* changed it as "Arohantu Janayo *Yonimagne*". The authorship of this mischief mainly goes to the name of Raghunandan, the Hindu revivalist of the middle age Bengal. Max Muller in his "Chips from a German Workshop" Vol. IV, pp. 35 first pointed it out. Later on R. C. Dutt and others exposed it with immmunerable proofs from different scriptures as pernicious.

It will not be out of place to remember here that from 16th century onwards efforts were made to prevent *sati* but force of tradition kept the practice alive in certain regions.[61] The Prevention of Sati Act of

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60. छायेवानुगता स्वच्छा सघाव हितकर्मसु।
दासीवादिष्टकार्येषु भार्या भर्तुः सदा भवेत्॥ व्याससंहिता १. २. ७.

61. In Bengal the custom of the sacrifice of the widow at the funeral of her husband was widely prevailing. It is Lord William Bentinck who prohibited the *sati* custom with the help of the people like Raja Rammohan Roy and others. The supporters of *sati* argued that the custom had a Vedic sanction. It was maintained in the funeral hymn of the Rigveda that the widows should ascend to the funeral pyre of their husbands. The following is a folksong that is written by a support Raja Rammohan Roy.

শোন শোন শোন সবে নরনারীগণ,
সহমরণ পেরথা নারী বধেরই কারণ।
নারী হত্যে মহাপাপ শাস্ত্রের বচন ;
নারী রক্ষে মহাকর্ম মহৎ কারণ।
ওগো সতী, স্বামী মরলে তোমাদের চিতেয়, যেতে হয়,
তোমরা মরলে পুরুষ ত' কেউ সঙ্গেতে না যায়।
সতী, গ.ভতে রেখে সন্তান যদি স্বামী চলে যায়,
বলো কোন দোষে নর শিশু যাবে যমালয়।
খুন করিলে খুনী ফাঁসিতে লটকায়—
জ্যান্ত মানুষ পুরিয়ে মারলে জেনো নরকগামী হয়।

1829 could not erase at a single stroke the sprit that moved Hindu women for *sati*.[62] This Act posed a new problem for the young widow : apart from depriving her of the glory and joy of *sati*, it meant that a more degrading existence became inevitable. A corollary to the Act was necessary in the form of opportunities for a second marriage, promising the start of an unattained new life. Through the efforts of Vidyasagar the Hindu Widow Remarriage Act was passed in 1856.[63] Still it was difficult for any widow even to convince of another husband in violation of family ideal. The cultural tradition was so great, and

তাই কলির রামমোহনে দিয়েছেন ডাক—
নারীবধ রোধ তরে বাজাও সবাই ঢাক। (বরাতীর গান, পূর্ব বঙ্গ)

Free translation :

Listen me you all men and women.
A burn to death on the funeral pyre of her husband
is nothing but to kill a woman.
To kill a human being is a sin
and to save one from death is a noble work
and a great work according to scripture.
O sati, you go to funeral pyre as soon as your husband is dead
But how many men sacrifice themselves when their wives die ?
If the husband is dead when his wife is pregnant,
tell me, what for the expected baby will suffer death ?
By commiting a murder the murderer is punished with a death sentence.
And those who kill a woman burning to ashes must go to hell.
Therefore Rammohan has made a clarion call in the Kaliyuga
Do please come out of home and beat the drum
to stop the slaughtering of the womenfolk.

Bengali quoted from S. Chakravarti's *Lokayata Bangala*, Calcutta, 1969

62. Lord William Bentinck issued his famous regulation in December 1829, making *sati* illegal in British India. "Sati custom could not have been in much greater vogue in the Hindu and Muslim periods than it was in the first quarter of the 19th century. The fact was that the advocacy of the custom in later Smriti and Puranas failed to make a wide appeal to Hindu community.....Thus when the father-in-law of Narayanrao Peshwa died, his wife desired to follow him on the pyre, She was, however, dissuaded by her relations. Ahalyabai Holkar, who embodied the orthodox Hindu culture of the age, did not herself become a *sati*, and tried her best, though without success, to dissuade her daughter from becoming one." (Altekar, 140 : 1962).

63. From the effort of Raja Rammohan Roy for the plight of woman, her immolation, Prevention of Sati Act, 1829 to the agitation started by Iswar Ch. Vidyasagar for widow remarriage and the Widow Remarriage Act of 1857, and the foundation of Bethune School, Calcutta, in 1849, Karve's Mahila Vidyalaya in 1907 ; are the landmarks for the uprising of womenfolk of India. Besides, Rannade, Tilak, Gandhiji and others made efforts after efforts for raising the standard of womenfolk of India. Organisations like National Council for Women, Indian Women's Association and others are also active in establishing equal rights and opportunities for all the citizens of India regardless of sex.

the desire to conform so strong, that even the lower castes which permited a second marriage of the widow endeavoured to restrict it in an attempt to reach the cultural level of the higher castes.[64]

It is interesting to find that even now, more than a hundred years after the permissive legalisation of the marriage of the widows, it is not regarded as normal for a widow to marry again in India. On the other hand polygyny which was so popular among the *kulins,* has got its natural death without any legislation. Thus, it can be suggested that it is not always possible to rule a society by imposing law.

The Special Marriage Act of 1872 allowed a man to contract legal marriage with a person not belonging to his own endogmous group. In addition to the exacting demands made by the Act, caste sentiments were responsible for the fact that they availed themselves of the provisions of the Act. This is borne out by the fact that as late as 1918 V. J. Patel failed to carry through the Central Legislative Council his Hindu Marriages Validity Bill to legalize intercaste marriage among the Hindus, although it was a permissive piece of legislation.[65] It explains why the Special Marriage Act was not enthusiastically responded to, even after being diverted of its exacting demands—the Special Marriage Act as amended in 1923.

III

CULTURE IN CONTACTS

The outstanding fact of India's socio-cultural history is that even in the remote past India was never isolated from other countries.[66] Some kind of contact was always maintained over thousands of years. But India's cultural development took a new turn after her contact with the western world. This contact has brought about a progressively accentuated reorganization of the productive arrangements. It has changed the outlook, behaviour and cultural patterns of the Indian men and women.

In accordance with general conception and constant influence of social, economic, and natural factors, social historians are trying again

64. Kapadia, K. M. op. cit.

65. ibid. It may be pointed out here that during the intercaste marriage between Parshi and Hindu communities—Firoz Gandhi and Indira Nehru (our Prime Minister)—strong controversies arose. It was Mahatma Gandhi who mediated and settled things right and said "It would have been cruelty to refuse consent to this engagement. As times advances such unions are bound to multiply with benefit to society" and it has become a reality now. (*Harijan*, 8. 3. 1942).

66. Majumdar, R. C. op. cit.

and again to find out facts for socio-cultural history of the country identifying and reidentifying their data from diverse view-points and researches in order to trace out an unbiased history. But historians are in no sense a free man. Of the past they could know only so much as the past is willing to yield off to them. Thus, all-round attempts, are being made by India's historians, anthropologists, archaeologists, sociologists and folklorologists to gather as much facts and data as possible from their respective fields and disciplines to build up a true history of India's past and present.

It is well-known that the history of India is the history of congruity and cohesion from Vedic period to Buddhist period. The history of contemporary India is more complicated than what was in the earlier periods.

Keeping in view all what have been said so long we will endeavour to study Indian women. It has been rightly said by a great many scholars of the world that the best way to judge the position of a nation is to find out the status of women of the respective country. The purpose of the present study is to know the position and status of the womenfolk, the power and the prestige they enjoy in their life-cycle, socio-economic-cultural-religious and political activities. It also touches such things as to how they face the problems and conflicts that are associated with them from birth to death. The problems involved are numerous and complicated, which can be studied from various disciplines. The present volume is an attempt to study them as an individual as well as members of the different families in terms of groups, subgroups and groupings.

Groups and groupings work within the frame work of culture:[67] In sociological study of culture starting point is Rice and River valley civilization. The present study, that is nearer to socio-historical group of discipline, has been processed in such a way that a correct picture of Indian womenhood may be had on the above line. Thus we have taken folklore as a tool to determine the position of women in different cultural settings. Before we proceed to in our detailed study of womanhood in general, few points regarding the social evolution of the position of woman vis-a-vis 'family' must be enumerated in addition to what have already been said earlier.

The original meaning of the word "family" (*familia*) is not that compound of sentimentality and domestic strife which forms the ideal of the present-day philistine ; among the Romans it did not at first even refer to the married pair and their children, but only to the slaves.

67. Majumdar, H. T. *The Grammar of Sociology*, Asia Pub. House, Bombay.

Famulus means domestic slave, and *familia* is the total number of slaves belonging to one man. As late as the time of *Gaius*, the *familia, id est patrimonium* (The family, i.e. the patrimony, the inheritence) was bequeathed by will. The term was invented by the Romans to denote a new social organism, whose head ruled over wife and children and a number of slaves, and was invested under Roman paternal power with rights of life and death over them all.

So Karl Marx said, "The modern family contains in germ not only slavery (*servitus*), but also serfdom, since from the beginning it is related to agricultural services. It contains *in miniature* all the contradictions which later extend throughout society and its state."

The pairing family itself too weak and unstable to make an independent household necessary or even desirable, in no wise destroys the communistic household inherited from earlier times. Communistic housekeeping, however, means the supremacy of women in the house; just as the exclusive recognition of the female parent, owing to the impossibility of recognising the male parents with certainty, means that the women, i.e. the mothers are held in high respect. One of the most absured notions taken over from eighteenth-century enlightment in Europe is that in the beginning of society woman was the slave of man. Among all savages and all barbarians of the lower and middle stages, and to a certain extent of the upper stage also, the position of women is not only free, but honourable.*

"The overthow of mother-right was the *world historical defeat of the female sex.* The man took command in the home also; the woman was degraded and reduced to servitude, she became the slave of his lust and a more instrument for the production of children. This degraded position of the women, especially conspicuous among the Greeks of the heroic and still more of the classical age, has gradually been palliated and glozed oven and sometimes clothed in a milder from, in no sense has it been abolished. The establishment of the exclusive supremacy of the man shows its effects first in the patriarchal family, which now emerges as an intermediate form."**

As regards the legal equality of husband and wife in marriage, the position is no better. The legal inequality of the two partners, bequeathed to us from earlier social conditions, is not the cause but the effect of the economic oppression of the women. In the old communis-

*For details vide Lewis H. Morgan, Ancient Society, or Researches in the Lines of Human Progress from Savagery, through Barbarism to Civilisation, London, Macmillan & Co. 1877—Evidences of Ashur Wright, many years missionary among the Iroquois Senecas.

**F. Engels—Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State, Bombay, 1944.

tic household which comprised many couples and their children, the task entrusted to the women of managing the household was as much a public and socially necessary industry as the procuring of food by the men. With the patriarchal family, and still more with the single monogamous family, a change came. Household management lost its public character. It no longer concerned society. It became a *private service*; the wife became the head servant, excluded from all participation in social production. Not until the coming of modern large-scale industry was the road to social production opened to her again and then only to the proletarian wife. But it was opened in such a manner that, if she carries out her duties in the private service of her family, she remains excluded from public production and unable to earn; and if she wants to take part in public production and earn independently, she cannot carry out family duties. And the wife's position in the factory is the position of wives in all branches of business right up to medicine and the law. The modern individual family is founded on the open or concealed domestic slavery of the wife, and modern society is a mass composed of these individual families as molecules. In the great majority of cases today, at least in the possessing classes, the husband is obliged to earn a living and support his family, and that in itself gives him a position of supremacy without any need for special legal titles and privileges. So F. Engels' commented, "Within the family he is the bourgeois and the wife represents the proletariate."

The division of labour within the family had regulated the division of property between the man and the woman; that division of labour had remained the same; and yet it now turned the previous domestic relation upside down, simply because the division of labour outside the family had changed. The same cause which had ensured to the woman her previous supremacy in the house—that her activity was confined to domestic labour—this same cause now ensured the man's supremacy in the house; the domestic labour of the woman no longer counted beside the acquisition of the necessities of life by the man; the latter was everything, the former an unimportant extra. We can already see from this that to emancipate woman and make her the equal of the man is and remaining an impossibility so long as the woman is shut out from social productive labour and restricted to private domestic labour. The emancipation of woman will only be possible when woman can take part in production on a large, social scale, and domestic work no longer claims anything but an insignificant amout of her time. And only now has that become possible through modern large scale industry, which does not merely permit of the employment of female labour over a wide range, but positively demands it, while it also tends towards

ending private domestic labour by changing it more and more into a public industry. But it is said by Mahatma Gandhi that it is degrading both for man and woman that woman should be called upon or induced to forsake the hearth and shoulder the rifle for the protection of the hearth ; it is a reversion to barbarity and the beginning of the end. Women workers should enrol women as voters, impart in them practical education, teach them to thin independently to release them from chain of castes which will compel man to realize woman's strength and capacity.

In a broad sense, it may be affirmed that the revolutionary changes in our industrial methods of production and in our transportation and communication systems have tended to affect the patterns of population concentration as well the patterns of social relationships owing to increase of the population and changes in social structure.[68] For instance, the presence of Muslims in large numbers and in a dominent position (as rulers) in northern India for a number of years has had the effect of weakening certain Hindu social customs and rituals. Then, there came religious movements as that of the Vaishnavism. It has a great effect on the life and living of the people.[69] Again, there has been another change in society after the partition of Bengal. With the partition of Bengal the whole structure of Bengalee society was rocked to its very foundation. The inter-mixture of different cultural traits of the Hindus of the eastern and western parts of Bengal as well as with different peoples of India have created a new social problem.[70]

(*Continued*)

68. Singer, Milton. (Guest editor) *Traditional India ; Structure and Change*, Journal of American Folklore, Vol. 71, No. 281. July-Sept., 1958 (special volume).

69. There are more than a dozen Vaishnava Upanishadas. It was in the period from 10th century up to the 17th century that many Vaishnava works were produced. The Vaishnavas regard the Pancharatra literature as almost equal to the Vedas. One of the most influential Vaishnava cults was founded by Vallabhacharya in the 15th century. Later, there arose the Chaitanya movement. Chaitanya, the great Vaishnava tacher of the 15th century, transformed the Vaishnava faith and extended his influence in most parts of Northern India.

70. Basu M. N. in a paper on the "Present Trend of Human Life in Modern World" says—a society is made up of two factors—an aggregate of individuals and a permanent organisation of their action and interaction. Thus every society creates its own type of personality by its way of bringing up children in the family by its system of education, by its effective values. Since economic organisation is based on continuous and ever increasing consumption, contemporary man is encouraged to be comsumption-crazy. Economic change indicate profound effects on social change. The effect of new economic order upon the social life is evident in modern social life. A change must take place in all sphere simultaneously—in the economic, political social and the spiritual. Man is a product of circumstances but circumstances are also his product. (Lecture delivered at the Anthropological Society, Calcutta).

NOTES AND NEWS

It a pleasure to announce that the next All-India Folklore Conference under the auspices of the Indian Folklore Society will be held at Calcutta in the last week of December, 1969. The Conference will be followed by an exhibition of books and journals of folklore and its allied subjects together with folk arts and crafts objects. It will also be enriched with folk cultural shows. Besides the Open and Concluding Sessions, the Conference will have the following sections :—

(i) Folk Literature and Tribal Study. In this section such papers and discussions will get priority that would concern country's unity than diversity ;

(ii) Folk Arts and Crafts. In this section papers and discussion on the applied side of folk art and craft will be appreciated ;

(iii) Folksong and Dance. In this section papers and discussions will be directed to different aspects of protest songs—social and political protest.

All these sections will be presided over by the competent scholars where delegates will read selected papers. The last date of receiving papers (with abstracts within 200/250 words) is Nov. 30, 1969. The approach and methods of folklore study, problems of documentation of folklore will also be examined by the specialists. The possibility of developing and improving the research conditions too will be considered and recommendations will be made for better and effective studies.

Reception Committee Membership fee :	..	Rs. 25/
Delegate fee (local)	.. ..	Rs. 12/
Delagate fee (outside)	.. ..	Rs. 25/

(including fooding & lodging for 3-days)

Papers may be presented or sent to the Committee. All participants including those who intend to attend personally, are requested to forward their manuscripts to the office with the above mentioned period. The participants who intend to attend to the conference or in the sectional meetings are requested to let the committee know of that by October 15, 1969 so that necessary accommodations may be made in due time. For further details please write to

The General Secretary,
Indian Folklore Society,
3, British Indian St., Calcutta-1 (India).

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The 28th International Congress of Orientalists will be held at the Australian National University, Canberra, A. C. T., from 6th to 12th January 1971. All scholars of the language, history literature and culture of Asia are welcome.

Enquiries should be addressed to :

The Secretary-General,
28 International Congress of Orientalists,
Australian National University Post Office
via Canberra City A. C. T. 2601, Australia.

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We mourn the death of Dr. Muhammad Sahidullha, the President of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Dacca on July 13 at the age 84. He was also a member of the Advisory Board of this journal for a long time.

Dr. Sahidullaha (1885-1969) was regarded as one of India's foremost authorities of Indian languistics and folklore and indological studies. He was also a great patron of Bengali language and literature. He had obtained his M.A. in 1912 from the University of Calcutta in Comparative Philology with honoures in Sanskrit and D. Lit. from University de Paries for his thesis *"Les chants mystiques ques de Kanha et Saraha'.*

Dr. Sahidullha joined in the Dacca University in 1921 and worked there upto 1944 where he devoted full time to research and teaching. He was connected with a number of learned associations of his country and abroad. In a future issue of this journal we will publish a fullength life-sketch of his

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Midnapur Sanskriti Parishad has just published a Bengali book which is entitled as "Samasamayik Narayangarh" by Kedarnath Pahari. The cost of the book 4.00 only. The foreword of the book is written by Dr. P. K. Bhowmick which is divided into 5 chapters, viz. geographical and political condition of the place; ancient legends and tradition, social and political movement; fairs, festivals, worships and education; and contemporary affairs etc.

* * * * *

Dr. P. K. Bhowmick's "Occupational mobility and Caste Structure in Bengal—Study in rural market" Rs. 15.00; Nandagopal Sengupta's "A Book of Bengali Verse—from 10th to 20th century", Rs. 15.00 and Prof. Sunil Chakravarty's "Lokayata Bangla" (In Bengali, Folklore Study it Bengal) Rs. 8.00 have just published. Available at Indian Publications, 3, British Indian St., Calcutta-1.

BOOK-REVIEW

PASCHIMBANGER PUJA-PARBAN-O-MELA (In Bengali, The Fairs and Festivals of West Bengal), 2nd part, Editor : Asok Mitra, Information and compilation : Arun K. Ray Supervision : Sukumar Sinha, Census of India 1961, Vol. 16, part 7-B. Publication Divisions, Delhi (1968), pp 732+16 maps,+60 photos.

This is the second of a series of four volumes that contains many valuable informations and data. It lists details of the fairs and festivals of the districts of Murshidabad, in pp 1-221, Nadia, in pp 223-402, Howrah, in pp 403-512 & Hooghly in pp 513-685 together with appendices etc. It represents a corpus arranged according to localities of the above districts and prefectures which is somewhat an introductory and descriptive character being collection of materials for a future study.

However interesting the future study may undoubtedly be, it is necessary to point out that the volume under review presents a great wealth of facts and insights and we have at our disposal a very well documented collection which may be used for more than one purpose.

First, it contains description of the villages, then description of the festivals along with the description of fairs etc. which may reflect more or less developed state of socio-folklorological excavations but there cannot be any doubt either that the editor and compiler presented us with one of the keys to the understanding of the socio-cultural history of the State.

Secondly, there is an unnecessary cleff between scholars interested in socio-cultural history or traditional thought in general and those studying the local legends etc. It is a rich source for any study of common ideas and if some of the ideas have already been studied, the details were widely scattered in various places without inspiring naturally both the group of scholars and enthusiasts.

The practical value of the book is still much enhanced by its very lucid language, by clear presentation, and last but not least, by painstaking accuracy. Eventhough, the reviewer believes that some repetitions could have been avoided and the editing could have been intelligible. But inspite of this causal remark, I do not feel the usaul necessity to stress, the book under review is an excellent one, since its value is obvious and undoubted. It is a welcome handbook and let us hope that we shall not wait too long for other volumes of this series.



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AUGUST, 1969.

S. L. SRIVASTAVA

JIUTIA FESTIVAL: A RECONSIDERATION OF THE CONCEPT OF "GENERALIZATION"

In this apaper attempt has been made to examine the validity of the concept of "Generalization" on the basis *Jiutia* festival observed in village Barigaon of Gorakhpur District (eastern U. P.) and the fact presented in Sanskritic literature, and given by various scholars.

Morris E. Opler has tried to coin two terms 'Generalization' and 'Particularization' on the basis of calendaric festivals. Regarding 'generalization' he writes that in it the progression is from the specific to the more comprehensive. In it we start with the immediate, the personal, the present and move toward the timeless, the inclusive, the abstract.[1] In order to support his statement he has given the example of *Jiutia* festival. He writes, "Jiutia obviously has its impetus in the individual mother's concern for the well-being of her son, and this personal interest is never entirely erased in the course of the rite....Nevertheless, in attempting to attain her goal, she moves far toward the merging of her need and her protective devices with those of others. She joins with the other women to go to worship at a sacred spot where one Brahman serves all who are there.....The ceremony has as its prime objective the placing of all the sons of all the women involved under the protection of Jiut Baba....Jiutia may have its psychological roots in the personal anxiety felt by the individual mother for her son, but through a process of generalization it has become a standard ritual means by which the whole community acts to safeguard its sons and to place them under the divine protection of a God who is the abstract essence of life itself"[2]

II

The festival of Jiutia falls on the 8th day of the dark-half of Kuar. Regarding this festival Morris E. Opler writes. "The name of the festival

and necklace is connected with the word for life (Jiu) and on this occasion Jiut Baba, a personification of life itself, is honoured and specially blesses male particularly sons of the family"[3]. Only the women with a son (sons) fast on this day and participate in the rites of this festival. They do not take even water during their fast of 24 hours. In the evening of this day they walk in a group to a tank at the outskirt of the village. Each carries a metal plate containing wet grams, *satanja* (grains of seven varieties), vermilion and *Jiutia* (necklace made of threads). After taking bath in the tank they place the gram, vermilion and the *Jiutia* under a wild plant known as *Bariar* representing god Jiutbandhan. Then they worship Jiutbandhan Maharaj while requesting him to protect their sons, and embrace the plant while uttering, "O Ariar O Bariar! My son may come beating others but not being beaten himself. O Ariar O Bariar !Tell Sita my regards". Afterwards all sit there to hear stories related to this festival. At the end of each story every woman says, "O Jiutbandhan Maharaj as you have helped her so help others". After the completion of the story-telling they fasten the Jiutia round their neck and return home to take rest during the night. Next day early in the morning *Bakhir* and *Puri* with pulse inside are prepared and offered first to the female ancestors of the house and then to other members of the family. Unlike the case observed by Opler in a north Indian village, in Barigaon no Brahman ever officiates throughout the whole rites of this festival.

III

This festival is also known as Jivit Putrikastami or Jivit Putrika Vrata. According to P. V. Kane this festival is celebrated to worship Jimutvahan, son of King Salivahana, by women for securing sons and *Saubhagya* (blessed wife-hood).[4] Regarding Salivahan Miss Karunakana Gupta writes, "As Dr. H. C. Ray Chaudhuri has pointed out, the Dvatrims-atputtalika represents Salivahan, the mythological representative of the Satvahana dynasty, as of mixed Brahmana and Naga origin (PHAI, p. 280)".[5] According to Kathasaritasagar[6] and Nagananda play,[7] Jimut-vahan, son of Jimutketu was a king of Vidyadharas,[8] who offered his life in place of a young serpent Shankhchuda, who was by virtue of an agree-ment to be offered to Garuda as his daily meal. When Garuda came to know this fact he was very much induced by the generous and touching behaviour of Jimutvahan and decided to give up his practice of devouring serpents[9]. Then Garuda bringing nector from Vaikuntha sprinkled over Jimutvahan and he restored to life with no mark of injury. When asked by Garuda for boon, Jimutvahan requested him to return life to all the snakes whom he had eaten before and whose bones only remained. Thereupon Garuda said, "so it be". Then all the snakes who had been

eaten by Garuda and whose bones alone remained rose up unwounded and restored to life by the nector of Garuda's boon[10].

While discussing Jiutia festival Opler has mentioned about Jiut Baba, who according to him, is identified by many villagers and Lord Siva. But while collecting data for this study no respondent has tried to identify Jiutbandhan Maharaj with Lord Siva. Instead, the fast observing women say that he is not a synonym of any god, but he himself is an individual god. Again the description of Jimutvahan given in Sanskritic scriptures, the views of the people regarding Jiutbandhan Maharaj and the practical aspects of *Jiutia* festival observed in Barigaon enable us to say that Jimutvahan and Jiutbandhan are synoymn and both represents the name of one single god. Phonetically also the word Jimutvahan may take the form of Jiutbandhan.

N. M. Penzer writes that on the basis of a paper on the Nagas, C. F. Oldham points out that in most of the temples dedicated to Vasuki (king of the snakes, often mentioned in the ocean), or Basdeo, in the Chenab valley there is, besides the figure of the Naga Raja, representation of his Vezier, who is called Jimutvahan. Legend says that Basdeo was engaged in war with Garuda, and that, on one occasion, the Naga chief was surrounded by the enemy and had a narrow escape. In fact, he was saved only by the devotion of his minister, who gave his own life to save that of his master. This probably means that Jimutvahan was killed in covering the retreat of the Raja. Basdeo escaped to the Kailas Kund, a mountain lake some 13,000″ level above the sea, between the Chenab and Ravi Valley. Meantime, an army was raised by which Garuda was defeated. The Naga Raja, in his gratitude, ordered that in future Jimutvahan should be worshipped in the same temple with himself.[11]

Worship of Jimutvahan along with the Nag Raj is substantiated by other sources also. P. Acharya has written that the canopy of the Anantesvara temple consists of seven snake-hoods and there are two Vidyadharis on back slab beyond the hood.... At both ends middle of the trifoliate arch a Rahumukha is carved and on each side of the Rahumukha there is one female figure riding on the flying Vidyadhara, a male figure. At the two Makara (corcodile) bases of the arch there are two images of Garuda.[12] This statement shows that in the temple of Anantesvara Vidyadharas are also represented. Jimutuvahan was the king of Vidyadharas. Thus the likelihood is that the Vidyadharas in the temple of Anantesvara are the representation of Jimutvahana.

IV

The facts given above show that Jimutvahan has sacrificed his life to protect Sankhchuda and the Nag Raj. He is worshiped along with Nag Raj and represented in the temple of Anantesvara. The descrip-

tion of the *Jiutia* festival observed in Barigaon show that women with son (sons) worship Jiutbandhan Maharaj (Jimutvahan) with the request to protect their sons and to bless them to be brave so that they may come home beating others but not being beaten themselves. The rites of *Jiutia* festival in Barigaon correspond to the mythological story of Jimutvahan and Sankhchuda. The congregation of mothers at the outskirt of the village near a tank to worship Jiutbandhan represent the congregation of all those snake mothers, who had heard that their sons have been revived because of Jimutvahan, at that place where Garuda used to get his food of snakes, to worship Jimutvahan and to bring back their revived sons. At the end of the worship of Jiutbandhan the fastening of *Jiutia* by the fasting women round their neck and coming back to home represent the snake-mothers' clinging their revived sons to their neck and coming back to home. These facts do not present any possibility to assume that the festival of *Jiutia* has its root in the personal anxiety felt by the individual mother for her son which through a process of generalization has become a standard ritual means by which the whole community acts to safeguard its sons and to place them under the divine protection of a God who is the essence of life itself. Instead they present the possibility to assume that this festival has its root in the collective consciousness of the women who reverently felt to worship Jimutvahan with this view that he might protect their sons as he has protected Sankhachuda, the only son of his parents, and the species of Nagas. Thus the theory of Opler behind the concept of 'Generalization' does not seem to be valid.

This theory may be refuted on other ground also. According to him *Jiutia* obviously has its impetus in the individual mother's concern for the wellbeing of her son or sons. But this festival is spread only in a particular area, i.e., in eastern U. P. The anxiety of all the mothers for the wellbeing of their son or sons is universal, then why it is not observed in other parts of India ? This point has been ignored by Opler while discussing the concept of 'Generalization'. His theory points out that the festival of *Jiutia* is originated on the basis of some rational views. The anxiety of a particular mother for the well being of her son or sons directed her thought to collect other mothers and accompanying with them to worship a God who is the abstract essence of life in itself, which through a process of generalization has become a standard ritual means by which the whole community acts to safeguard its sons. In reality this theory is based only on one aspect i.e., psychological, while ignoring other aspects such as mythological and historical.

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S. K. AHUJA

ANTIQUITY OF NUPTIALS

The institution of marriage is as old as the history of mankind. The stabilizing effect that the wedlock has had in shaping man's social destiny can at no time be over-emphasised. It, in fact, may aptly be described as a very important social milestone in man's gregarious life. Today man gives little, if any, thought to the processes through which this institution, or better, custom, has passed and crystallized in its present form. It is, for instance, shocking for many of us to know that capture by force was the cardinal means of acquiring a companion that the primitive man adopted. Even the civilized world of as recent times as the beginning of the sixteenth century was shadowed by this odious custom. It indeed is an intellectually rewarding exercise to delve into the history of marriage.

Capture of women, along with looting and arson, appears to have been an appendage of the warring instinct of primitive man who perhaps was obliged to wage wars in the interest of survival. And, perhaps, the theory of the survival of the fittest, in its physical ramifications, proved itself in the world of the hoary man. From the belief that the captured women were the spoils of war and prizes of men's valour—often subjecting them to a life of slavery and promiscuity—slow evolutionary process of recognising the captured woman as a companion and wife took shape. Traditions really die hard and even to this day certain tribes in the inaccessible recesses of African jungles observe the essentials of this system, and even some of the more refined African societies stage mock captures which are inseparable from the ceremonies of marraige among them.

Rich heiresses in England in the early 16th century often risked themselves being captured and thus forced to marry against their will. Armed escorts trailed the rich beauties of France, Italy and Ireland to foil attempts of adbuction. The custom waned imperceptably in Europe and instances of its sporadic occurrances are to be found right up to the yester-century. No country of our globe, it is authoritatively claimed, has been exception to the operation of this custom. The Bible which portrays the life and custom of the ancient people, cites numerous instances of the practice of forcible seizures of women and virgins by invading warriors who later on granted them the status of wifehood.

Variations of the theme of marriage by force were in evidence of the social structure of almost all the countries of the world. From the abode of the primitive man in Africa and Australia to the sophisticated and

cultured man in England, the custom has held sway. Ample evidence is available to show that the custom was practised once upon a time by the Muria Gonds and a certain section of population in Tibet. The custom would appear to have ancient moorings in India. The Code of Manu explicitly permits forcible marriage to the warrior race, Kshtriyas. This system was also characterised as 'Rakshasa' mode of marriage.

Some historically acceptable traces of the custom in relation to India are to be found in the episode of Prithviraj's capture of Sanjukta. The event suggests that not only was the custom prevalent in India, it also had the royal sanction, having been followed by the ruling class. What is patronised by the royalty may obviously be taken as an accepted procedure by the commonalty.

The forms that the custom took are as numerous as they are fascinating. Bushmen of Australia pounced on unwary girls as on a beast of prey, dragging them to jungle clearing and conferring on her the status of wifehood in the presence of the village folk. Likewise, certain tribals of Cille followed an identical pattern, taking, away the bride forcefully while groom's people negotiated terms with girl's family.

While in the beginning, the groom's party may have been facing stiff, practical resistence from the bride's people, often resulting in serious physical injury, the practice gained implied recognition and ultimately only mock resistence was offered. Shouting, brow-beating, imitative fight actions, steadily replaced the original scene.

Marriage by Elopement

Marriage by elopment was, as at present, a convenient device of young lovers to frustrate the designs of parental obstruction. After the wrath of the parents had cooled down, the couple often return to obtain their blessings. In an African community, the couple who go to live in a forest after elopment, return to their settlement only when a child is born of their union. Many a youngman of various ethnic group of different castes in India settle up with their paramours in far away villages and return to their native place after years. A rather trying ordeal has to be gone through by the eloping couples of Chittagong (East Pakistan) areas as they must successfully run away four times before they are socially recognised as husband and wife.

The bought wife

The concept of marriage by purchase has had as deeply entrenched roots as marriage by capture. The cult of slavery was perhaps the factor most responsible for its thriving. The beauty of the bought female

slave may have so turned the head of the purchaser that he may have assigned her a special position. And from them on, it was a matter of evolution. Apart from this, scarcity of female population and greed on the part of parents of the beautiful maidens appear to be plausible considerations in this regard. The price pair for acquiring a wife has varied from foodstuffs to a hundred cattle heads among the primitive aborigines of Afriet. At one time, in Mecca, a virgin cost anything from fifty to three hundred and fifty dollars worth. Among Muslims the custom of paying a consideration to the father of the bride is still prevalent.

Perhaps the wife became the bought slave of the husband as evidence shows that in England the wife fell at husband's feet, kissing them, in the same fashion as any Hindu wife required to do not so long ago. Some form of this Hindu custom was followed in Russia and France too. In the latter country, an ingenuous alternative was devised which obliged the wife to bow down before the husband for retrieving the wedding ring that was deliberately thrown at or near his feet.

The system of hire purchase may seem to us as the offshoot of contemporary economic activity; yet it was extensively made use of by the ancient peoples in the context of marriage by purchase. Youngmen were encouraged to make payment to the girl's parents by instalments. As soon as more than half of the total payment had been made, the boy was permitted to associate with the girl and even allowed to consummate marriage. In certain cases the boy was allowed to work as a labourer for a stipulated period on the farm property of his future in-laws so that he could pay his way out to marrying the damsel of his fancy. This custom had been in common vogue in certain parts of Assam, having been assoduously followed by some tribal clans. The would-be groom made a gift of choice liquor to the parents of the girl and mooted the suggestion of marrying the daughter. If the proposition was acceptable, the boy was engaged as a farm hand for three seasons, but was free to claim the girl after one season; nonetheless he was obliged to work out for the full contracted period.

The institution of marriage has been no exception to the process of evolution towards refinement and excellence. The courtship, the marriage in a Registry Office, the simple form of Church marriage, the elaborate rituals of Hindu and Oriental marriages, are all the products of genius of man's quest for the best. Many a person would perhaps be willing to accept the mode of marriage by capture, were it to guarantee peace and conjugal harmony. One can, at best sing reminiscently with Alexander Pope (with apology) that—

> "For forms of marriage let fools contest,
> Whatever is adjusted best is best."

SANKAR SEN GUPTA

SOCIO-CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS OF THE PEOPLE OF INDIA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO WOMEN

(Continued from previous issue)

Society

Before we discuss the structure of Indian women we will also say a few words about human society. It is Hegel who analysed progress into three stages which he called Thesis, Antithesis, and Synthesis. Applying this idea to educational theory, A. N. Whitehead adopted the terms, Stage of Romance, Stage of Precision, and Stage of Generalization. Jules Henry has stressed the need of reviewing the traditional concepts. Outstanding among the concepts, is the concept of "culture", which he defines as "the individual's or group's acquired response 'systems'. The definition of culture in terms of acquired characteristics, leads us back to Boas's original conception of changes in mental function under the influence of domestication. It is the domestication of *Homo sapiens* that brings it about, that man has an enormous number of response system that are not genetically determined".[71] How and why man and the anthropoid are branched off, and when, are among the mysteries of nature. It is man who has been engaged in describing himself and his activities, ever since he achieved cognition and the ability to communicate. Broadly speaking, man has passed from the food gathering to the food-producing stage. When he was dependent solely upon direct appropriation of the gifts of nature his numbers must have been very small indeed. Roughly, man has passed through the food-gathering, hunting, fishing, and nomadic existence—moving with the seasons to pasture his cattle and sheep—to the agricultural form of economy.[72]

The invention of agriculture by the womenfolk was the most momentous event in the life of early man. With oxen to plough the land, with pottery for storing harvested grain, with the

71. Kurulkar, G. M. op. cit.
72. Majumdar, H. T. op. cit.

wheel to accelerate transportation and to make less arduous, collective man had to settle down in a given place if he was to reap the full rewards of his agricultural pursuits. From this time onward the conception of life of the ancient man changed to agriculture from hunting and cattle grazing. Thus, arose the first continuous settled community, the agricultural village. lower and higher. Then owing to industrial development and scientific progress cities and towns began to appear one after another. Wealtheir and employment seekers came and settled to the towns and cities who have formed their own society—sophisticated society. The people who live in the agricultural villages of India are unsophisticated people and majority in number. These people have their own way of living. They are rich with oral traditional literature and culture and may be viewed from the following three terms: (i) structurally (ii) functionally and (iii) dynamically, i.e. in in terms of process.[73]

Structurally, society is the cultural framework of the total social heritage of folkways, mores and institutions, of habitism, sentiments and ideals. In short, all the non-material elements of culture are potent in this structure. *Functionally,* society is a complex of group. It has a receiprocal relationship that interacts upon one another within the cultural context and enables human organism to carry on their life-activities helping each person to fulfill his special wishes and accomplishes his special interests in association with his fellow-being. *Dynamically,* society is the process of stimulus-response relationships culminating in interaction, communication and consensus.[74]

Political upheavals caused by frequent aggression on the country hampered scientific progress in India. Impacts with Muslims, Dutch, Portuguse, French and English, became urgent, and helped to demolish many ancient ideas and thoughts even in the daily necessary things like medicine. Alan Greggy makes the following statement: "The totality, that is a human being, has been divided for study into parts and systems. One cannot deny the method but one is obliged to remain satisfied with its results alone. What brings and keeps our several organs and numerous functions in harmony and federation? And what has medicine to say of the fecile seperation of "mind" from "body"? What makes an individual, what the word implies—not divided? The need for more knowledge here is an excruciating

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73. Ibid.
74. Ibid.

obviousness. But more than mere need there is fore-shadowing of changes to come."[75]

We owe to all that is wonderful in the culture. Culture is created by man. Through this we attain unity. Unity of mankind are to be earned by our own efforts for which we want to know the past and the present and by these we can suppose future. In order to know the past there is no better tool to depend upon than folklore or oral traditional materials. Because we know that before there was any written literature there already existed, among many ancient nations, a vast and complex form or oral traditional literature.[76] This traditional literature in an ancient land like India has complexity and diversity. It is also a living force. Its origin, we can only surmise, goes back to the beginning of India's unrecorded history when the need arose to communicate instruction to the young and to preserve it for subsequent generations.

Since we have no records for how pre-historic man lived and behaved, and no prospects of obtaining any, we cannot hope to verify hypothesis which depend on unsound evidences. We can occasionally show that explanations founded on assumptions about prehistory and prehistoric men are improbable. More than this, 'man is the culture making animal' (Ruth Benedict). His centuries old civilization is at the mercy of any accident of time or space. Man always evolves elaborate traditional ways of doing things. No people have any truly empirical ethics; they uphold what they find themselves practicing. "No human being or group of human beings can ever freshly see the world in which they move. Every human is born into a world defined by already existing cultural patterns. Just as individual who has lost his memory is no longer 'normal' so the idea that any point in its history a society can become completely emancipated from its past culture is inconceivable" (ibid).

We know that man shared in common with other animals in the capacity to vocalize, to emit sounds. In course of time, the redimentary grunts and groans—a form of erotive language—gave away to referential language. For many many centuries, this referential language was spoken, not written; even so it gave man a tool possessed neither by birds nor by beasts. Now he could pass on the accumulated wisdom of the ages by word of mouth. Later when pictographs,

75. Kurulkar, G. M. op. cit.

76. Long, James (Rev. Father) 500 Question on the subjects requiring investigation of the people of India, Indian Publications, 1966.

ideographs, and alphabetic writings were invented, man began to pass from the haze of prehistory into the clear light of his superorganic power, began to increase by leaps and bounds by means of diffusion as well as by means of new invention.

PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH

Language :

Language cannot grow overnight. It has its own laws of growth. It forms one of the main elements in people's cultural life. Aryan language began to spread all over the country as a matter of course. References to languages other than Aryan dialects are exactly rare in Sanskrit and other Aryan literature. The languages are usually determined in terms of the placements in classification of language families, branches or groups and are decided on the basis of grammatical characterestics of specific language. It is true that a number of Indian languages and its Persian usages show some resemblences to European languages which gave rise to the name "Indo-Eupopean" for the whole group of language.[77] It is believed that in the distant past India and Iran were invaded by tribes from some other parts of the world. The tribes that spoke Indo-European languages conquered those countries. The conquerors declared themselves "higher" race than whom they had enslaved ; they gave themselves the name "Arya". People who speak in their mother tongue are proud of their own languages and resent any other language being forced on them. Language, on the development of society it emerges, lives and dies as peoples develop, it has no casual relation with the races.[78]

The language of India developed along with the people of India. There is no single or one language in India which can represent the country as a whole as the only Indian language. It is a multi-lingual country which is representated by different language families and dialect speakers. Sir Grierson, who form 1880's upto 1941, when he died, carried on investigations into Indian languages.[79] He drew scientific study of the linguistic map of the country and maintains that India has 179 languages and 544 dialects.[80] But this number has to be taken with a good deal of reservation. Of these languages, 116 are

77. Nigam, R. C. "Languages of India" Lecture given at the School of Humanistic and Cultural Studies, Ramkrishna Mission Institute of Culture on 12. 1. 1968. Also published in *Bul. of RMIC*, Vol. XIX, no. 3, March, 1968.

78. Chatterjee, S. K. and Katre, S. M. "Languages" in the Gazetter of India : Vol. 1. Country and People, Publication Dvn. Delhi, 1965.

79. ibid.

80. ibid.

small tribal speeches of the Tibeto-Chinese family and they are found only on the northern and north-eastern fringes of India. These languages are current among less than one per cent of entire population of the country.[81] Nearly two dozen more are, likewise, insignificant speeches of other language groups; or they are languages not truly belonging to India.[82]

The women of India of all language families and dialects have their own women's dialects, own chit-chat, own abuse and love-words and these represent them faithfully. This can be illustrated taking the help of Sukumar Sen[83] from the standard colloquial of West Bengal. He says that "As expected women's dialect in Bengali is archaic both in pronunciation and vocabulary. There are a great many words spoken generally by women, which occur in mediaeval Bengali works —especially in the Vaishnava lyrics—but not in modern Bengali as spoken by men.

Pejoration and vulgarity are also dominant characteristics of the language of the Bengali women." Perhaps it is also true for the womenfolk of other language groups and dialects. The following are examples of women's dialect in Bengali :

They call such act as *thona*[84] that means a blow on the cheek with finger. *Eyo*[85] means women with her husband living; *poyati*[86] means a woman big with child, *chhenal, dhemni*[87] etc. means a coquette, a characterless woman; *dhumni, dhumri*[88] means a grown up girl, a fat woman; *dajjal*[89] means a vixen; *paraberani*[90] means a constant visitor of neighbours; *paradhalani*[91] means one who plays the coquette among her neighbours: *paramajani*[92] means one who charms her neighbour, *gatarkhaki*[93] means

81. Nigam, R. C. op. cit.

82. Chatterjee, S. K. and Katre, op. cit.

83. Sen, Sukumar "Women's Dialect in Bengali" (Reprint from the Journal of Department of Letters), Calcutta University, 1928.

84. থেনা।

85. এয়ো।

86. পোয়াতী।

87. ছেনাল, ঢেমনী।

88. ধুমনী, ধুমড়ী।

89. দজ্জাল।

90. পাড়াবেড়ানী।

91. পাড়াচলানী।

92. পাড়াবজানী।

93. গাতরখাকী।

one who has runined her body ; *bhatarkhaki*[94] means one who has lost her husband ; *pet felani*[95] means procuress of abortion ; *gharjalani*[96] means she who harms her own people ; *jhantapeta*[97] means beaten with a broom ; *kancha poyati*[98] is one who has recently given birth to a child ; *dhaladhali*[99] suggests close and intimate companionship (prejorative) ; *biyarphul*[100] means to have time of marriage arrived ; *Pacca chule sindur para* means may you paint vermilion on your forehead even when your hairs are grey, *dhaneputre laxmi love hok*, may you prosper in wealth and children and *hater noya akshay hok*[101] means may your iron bracelets were not out from your wrist. All these are the dialects that are used by folkwomen of Bengal in different times. These suggest their position vividly. We will see later how we can draw the character, status and position of womenfolk with the aid of such folk words and other genre of folklore. A great many sayings, songs, proverbs etc. used by women in those days are still current among the womenfolk in India today. Therefore by studying them we can also glean the position of ancient India. It is said that "It is quite possible that some of these popular maxims may be traced as far back as the early or the middle Indo-Aryan period."[102] With these few words about the Bengalee women's dialect, we will treat the language of India with more details in the following pages.

It is Robert Caldwell who established the seperate existence of a Dravidian speech-family in 1856 as opposed to the Aryan family in the north.[103] Some scholars, about that time, separated the Munda Language family. In this way, the hundreds of languages and dialects (which were to be found in India and Burma) were brought under one or the other of the following Four Great Speech-families :

(i) the Aryan, or Indo-European ;

(ii) the Dravidian ;

ভাতারখাকী।

95. পেট ফেলানী।

96. ঘর জ্বালানী।

97. ঝাঁটা পেটা।

98, কাঁচা পোয়াতী।

99 ঢলাঢলি।

100. বিয়ার ফুল ;

101. (১) পাঁকা চুলে সিন্দুর পরো, (২) হাতের নোয়া অক্ষয় হোক and (৩) ধনে পুত্রে লক্ষীলাভ হোক (These three expressions imply may your husband live till you get old and die—Quoted from Sukumar Sen's above book).

102. Sen, Sukumar op. cit.

103 Caldwell, R. *A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian or South Indian Family of Languages* : Revised and edited by Rev. G. L. Wyatt & T. Ramakrishna Pillai, Madras, 1961.

(iii) the Munda or Kol as a member of the Austro-Asiatic branch of the Austric family of language and

(iv) the Sino-Tibetan.

These are composed of diverse racial elements and these language families are represented by four broad language and culture groups. They have had the history of living together for atleast 3000 years,[104] if not more. The plurality of language appear to have played no distrubing role during the course of early and medieval periods of Indian history through which the pan-Indian character of Indian civilization sustained itself.[105]

It is to be noted in this connection that among the four language groups, the Aryan speech-family was last to come—it was preceded by the Dravidian, Sino-Tibetan and Austric. In the evolution of the Indian people and of Indian culture, there has been, as said before, intermixture of races, languages and the various cultural *milieus*. Although the Austric and Sino-Tibetan languages are now confined to small populations, they have had their share in developing or modifying the other languages.

It is not known how and when these language families moved to India. Before their advent, there was the language of Negroid peoples, who pioneered into India from Africa along the Asian coastline, probably before the 6th millennium B.C.[106] But on the mainland of India nothing has remained of their language, the original Negroid peoples having been killed or absorved by subsequent immigrants. Thus, in the languages of the three main families spoken today—Aryan, Dravidan, and Austric,—there has been much mutual borrowing. These contacts have introduced the normal process of inter-influencing of linguistic traits.

Of the four, the Austric language speakers occupy a vast area spreading from Central India through Assam, Burma, Malay and Indonesian Islands right up to the eastern and southern extremities of the pacific including Hawaii Islands and New Zealand. This family further subdivided into Austronesian and Austro-Asiatic. In India, Austro-Asiatic subfamily is represented by the speakers belonging to Munda branch, Mon-Khemer branch including Khasis and Nicobarese. They Speak in Santals, Mundari, Ho, Bhumij, Korku, Kharia, Savara, etc. and is representated by a population of little more than a million according to 1961 census.

Next, Tibeto-Chinese family of language. It's area stretches

104. Nigam, R. C. op. cit.

105. Chatterjee, S. K. and Kartre, op. cit.

106. Sen, Sukumar *History and Pre-history of Sanskrit*, Mysore, 1957.

right from Baltistan in the west to the north-eastern frontiers of the country and further reaching up to the southernmost portions of Assam. The total population in this language family is about 3.2 million where there are as many as 226 names of mother tongues which have been enumerated in 1961.

On scrutiny, it has tentatively been considered that about 98 languages are in existence in India and they are mostly oral which has no script or are available in written form.[107] The most famous speakers are Meithei-Manipuri, Boro, Garo, Tripuri, Lushai, Miri, Abor etc. This has again two subfamalies (i) Siamese-Chinese and (ii) Tibeto-Bhutan. Tibeto-Bhutan subfamily is further divided into (a) Tibeto-Himalayan and (b) Assam-Burmese branch. The speakers of the Tibeto-Chinese family as a whole, are : Bhotia Lahuli, Bhutani, Balti, Boro, Mech, Garo, Koch, Rabha, Mikir, Naga, Manipuri, Miri, Abor, Dafla, Aka, Mishmi, Nokte etc. Many of these languages and dialects have influenced surrounding Indo-Aryan languages like Assamese, Bengali, Nepali, Hindi, or Punjabi.[108]

The Dravidian language family has a total speakers of more than 107 million. This family embraces four major regional language areas of the South India i.e. Telugu, Tamil, Kannada and Malayalam. They together account for 95.58 per cent of the total number of Dravidian speakers in the country and of the four great Dravidian languages, Tamil appears to have preserved its Dravidian character best.[109]

The Indo-European language family embraces by far the largest number of human beings on the earth. In India, this great family is represented by its sub-families. According to 1961 census approximately 322 million speakers are accounted in this language family which is about 73.3 per cent of the entire population of India. Out of the 14 major languages approved by the Constitution of the Republic of India, 10 including Sanskrit come within the orbit of the Indo-Aryan subfamily. This subfamily is again divided into 3 branches, (i) Iranian (ii) Dardin and (iii) Aryan. The first is representated by Persian, Pashto, Balochi and are considered of foreign origin ; the next is represented by Kafir, Dard, and Khowar which has the strength of about 2 million speakers, and the third is represented by the largest number of languages, such as (i) North-western group including Lahnda or Western Punjabi dialects and Sindhi, (ii) Southern-group including Marathi and Konkani ; (iii) Eastern-group including, Assamese,

107. Linguistic Survey Report by the office of the Registrar General of India, New Delhi.

108. ibid.

109. Nigam R. C. op. cit.

TABLE IV-A

Genetic relationship of Indo-Aryan Languages

Old Indo-Aryan (Vedic, Early Sanskrit)*

(A) Spoken dialects of OIA						(B) Literary forms of OIA & MIA
Western and North Western	South Western	Midland	Eastern		Northern	Southern	Classical Sanskrit Buddhist Sanskrit Pali The Literary Prakrits & Apabhramshas
[Kekaya, Vracada 'Gandhari'] Hindki ; Sindhi ; Eastern Punjabi (Strongly influenced by Midland)	[Avanti, Saurastri etc.] Gujarati, Rajasthani, Malavi (strongly influenced by Midland)	[Sauraseni] Western Hindi (Khari-Boli Hindusthani or Hindi-Urdu) Braj-bhasa Kanauji Bundeli	[Ardha-Magadhi] Kosali (or East-earn Hindi Awadhi, Bagheli, Chattisgarlic) Halbi	[Magdhi] Bhojpuri Maithili Magahi Oriya Bengali Assamese	[Khasa] Pahari or Himalayan speeches (strongly influenced by Midland)	[Maharastri] Marathi Konkani	

*Source : The Gazeeteer of India, 1965.

The next table will speak of the State-wise major speakers of language in contemporary India

TABLE

State-wise major speakers

State	Assamese	Bengali	Gujarati	Hindi	Kannada	Kashmiri
Andhra Pradesh	122	3,346	20,467	136,069	381,860	104
Assam	6,784,271	2,061,533	712	511,618	206	41
Bihar	224	1,164,041	20,068	20,567,755	674	186
Gujarat	37	3,393	18,671,562	192,279	5,192	122
J. & K. State	5	400	79	22,323	14	1,896,149
Kerala	14	670	6,927	7,327	62,068	17
M. P.	595	52,813	127,613	21,686,140	4,454	552
Madras	70	2,498	17,929	38,974	853,211	89
Maharastra	272	29,114	1,067,509	1,088,927	629,583	658
Mysore	121	2,583	27,944	81,500	15,361,051	23
Orissa	—	125,687	9,436	174,011	584	2
Panjab	1,196	4,811	1,852	11,297,838	604	8,124
Rajasthan	71	8,807	41,833	650,554	371	317
U. P.	303	104,528	12,831	62,442,721	1,527	1,316
W. B.	8,279	29,408,246	25,707	1,894,039	683	99

Source : The Gazetteer of India 1965, Appendix VI.

There are recognisable geographical bands where there are more than 1000 ratio, a curious pattern, except for eastern Madhya Pradesh and Bihar largely on It will be seen sex ratio is appreciably lower in north of latitude 22° than south of it.

IV-B

of languages of India, 1961

Malayalam	Marathi	Oriya	Punjabi	Sanskrit	Tamil	Telugu	Urdu
23,348	276,968	189,497	10,125	25	434,713	30,932,257	2,553,753
2,204	5,452	145,488	8,938	—	4,501	19,786	11,263
7,559	5,074	302,951	70,988	129	16,177	37,214	4,149,245
7,709	191,200	379	14,627	99	13,264	10,542	594,538
156	226	26	109,174	3	349	172	12,445
16,065,468	18,570	59	1,147	7	527,613	44,838	9,160
19,816	860,318	304,297	103,291	384	26,173	55,824	740,098
399,206	51,431	399	3,473	117	28,011,099	3,363,579	615,503
90,459	30,233,034	3,383	101,317	82	159,396	623,803	2,725,689
290,586	1,056,498	252	5,336	125	854,227	2,044,249	2,034,481
4,832	1,084	14,434,887	6,966	—	6,918	393,453	212,891
6,387	4,851	532	8,336,787	124	6,789	2,410	255,660
2,213	9,183	1,408	401,115	31	3,443	1,181	509,654
7,715	14,466	1,355	345,181	1,330	12,399	4,530	7,891,710
8,320	13,239	212,890	12,398	14	32,663	80,930	832,847

females per 1,000 males. If districts and States are arranged according to sex account of their tribal populations, will seem to emerge on either side of latitude 22° This is reflected also in the sex ratio of urban areas in the north and south.

Bengali, Oriya, and Bihari language speeches of Maithili, Magahi, and Bhojpuri, and (iv) Central group including the broad Hindi language areas of Awadhi and Chhatisgarhi, Hindi area of Delhi and Western Uttar Pradesh including Urdu, Khari Boli, Hindusthani, Bangru, Brah, Bhakha, Kanuji, Bundeli, Punjabi, Dogri, Gujarati and Rajasthani speeches like Marwari, Nepali, Garhwali, Kumaun, Chameli, Mandeali, Kului, Mahasu and Sirmaui and so on are also grouped with this language family.

The Old Indo-Aryan language family may be summarised in the form of a table showing the genetic relationship of Indo-Aryan languages. (See Table IV-A and IV-B).

The Dravidian languages form a family by themselves and belong to the class of speeches known as "Agglutinative" i.e. the word is made up of a root which comes at the head or beginning, and the root is followed by one or more terminations. Structurally, Dravidian languaages agree with other language groups outside India—the Ural-Altaic (Turkish, Mongal, Manchu, Finn, Eath, Lapp, Hungarian) and the North-East Asian languages (like Japanese, Korean, Ainu, Khamchadal and Yukaghir"[110] Recent investigations in culture-areas reveal that the area occupied by distinct languages are not coterminus with the culture areas. And the cultural relationship may be based not merely on linguistic affinities but other things, such as religion etc., are equally important. Thus we are placing under a note on religion. Religion in India is inseperable with the life of Indian men and women. It is especially important for the womenfolk of the country. The life of Indian women is inconceivable without religion. Used with full understanding it can become one of her life's biggest supports.

Religion :

Religion plays an important part in the life of the Indians. That India is a land of tolerance is not only proved by the co-existence of various religious sects or groups but also from the fact that even after the partition of the country in 1947 on the basis of religion—Hinduism and Islam—there are over 50 million Muslims in India.

Needless to remember that men and women of different groups are linked by communications and contacts and undergoing changes. From this process modern men and women have become a mixture of numerous ancient and contemporary types. This explains, to a considerable extent, why men and women of different races are found in one biological whole. Thus men and women of all the races are

110. Chatterjee S. K. and Katre, S. M. op. cit.

dependent to each other. No section can be survived by ignoring the other.

It is well known that in the formation of the man and woman and their bodies, there are certain glands, the serum of which are circulated through vain. This process has great role in the shaping to human body, their minds and nature. In this way, a woman gets sweet voice, becomes affectionate to human being, nature and other things. Along with her body structure, she develops finer tastes, efficacious character and certain womanish interests, which are exclusively her own. She, by virtue of nature's gift, is intended to be soft, tender-hearted, sympathetic to mother and children. These things influence her to a great extent unconsciously. So she becomes emotional. She is the embodiment of sacrifice and suffering. As a mother, she is most delightful. Taking blessings and inspiration from her, whatever works a man undertakes, succeeds. Thus, a man is delighted being able to get her touch, her good wishes. From her he acquires ability to work and becomes active with her power is the conception of India.

Women are superior to men in beauty and loveliness. Physically men are stronger and powerful than women.[111] Women are best in tending to bring prosperity, they are the combination of Lakshmi and Saraswati, Goddesses of Wealth and Learning when men are superior in intelligence, they symbolize Brahma, Lord of the Lords. Every woman has great feelings. She is kind hearted so she has acquired the position of a wife, which according to the Hindu idea means *sahadharmini* or *ardhangini* or half of the body. It is like the negative and positive wire, the conjunction of the two brings the current of the light. The man and woman both together create human society through their conjugal relations. When one is mild, the other is hard ; one manages the other in the family and society life. Thus man and woman together lead a happy family which is the source for the prosperity of a nation. So Indian philosophers preferred to call man and woman as *purusa* and *prakriti* respectively.

Nevertheless there is bifurcation. Whilst both are fundamentally one, it is also equally true that in the body form there are a vital differences between the two. Hence the vocation of the two must also be different. The duty of motherhood, which women will always undertake, requires such qualities that man need not posses. She is passive, he is active. Such is the mistress of the house and without her care the race must become extinct. We have many abuses in our midst, moral,

111. **Tagore, Rabindranath, *Rabindra Rachanabali*, part 13. Published by the Govt. of West Bengal, Calcutta 1368-1373 B.S.**

social, economic and political.[112] They require patient study, projected research and sober judgment.

In our present-day society, we find a constructively developing materialist concept, that is why, there is endeavour after endeavour to know each other from minute details. When we examine the position and stutus of women of India from the point of view of living religions survived, we find that each and every religion has its fundamental approach to their women. And by their nature and teachings we can study the character of the womenfolk. Some have greater aptitude than other for expressing themselves in religious matters when others seem to be materialistic. They all have created problems peculiar to their own characters and set-ups. So far as Hinduism is concerned which is the chief religion of India, it is full with receptivity and all comprehensiveness.

The following table contains speakers of major religions in India according to 1961 census. It shows that India has no difficulty in bringinging diverse faiths within its widening fold.

TABLE V

State-wise Population of major religions, 1961

States/Country	Buddhists	Christians	Hindus	Jains	Muslims	Sikhs
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
India	3,256,036	10,728,086	366,526,866	2,027,281	46,940,799	7,845,915
A. P.	6,753	1,428,729	31,813,944	9,012	2,715,201	8,563
Assam	36,513	764,553	7,884,921	9,468	2,765,509	9,686
Bihar	2,885	502,195	39,345,517	17,598	5,785,631	44,413
Gujarat	3,185	91,028	18,356,065	409,754	1,745,103	9,646
J & K.	48,360	2,848	1,013,193	1,427	2,432,067	63,069
Kerala	228	3,587,365	10,282,568	2,967	3,027,639	822
M. P.	113,365	188,314	30,425,798	247,927	1,317,617	65,715
Madras	777	1,762,954	30,927,115	28,350	1,560,414	2,567
Maharastra	2,789,501	560,594	32,530,901	485,672	30,34,332	57,617
Mysore	9,770	487,587	20,582,853	174,366	2,328,376	3,287
Orissa	454	201,017	17,123,194	2,294	265,319	5,030
Punjab	14,857	149,834	12,930,045	48,754	393,314	6,769,129
Rajasthan	759	22,864	18,132,690	409,417	1,314,613	274,198
U. P.	12,893	101,641	62,437,316	122,108	10,788,089	283,737
W. B.	112,253	204,530	27,523,358	26,940	6,985,287	34,184

Source : Gazetter of India, 1965.

It is the idea of some philosophers that men, women and religions

112. Gandhi, M. K. *Women and Social injustice*, Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, 1942.

have mutual need for each other. Their range and varieties are remarkable in India and they have manifested themselves in great many forms. They contain not only much that is crude, unintelligible, and rational, but also much that is noble, idealistic, inspiring, and enduring. The apparant chaos or confusion of rites, rituals, beliefs, practices, superstitions, etc. do not represent the country or the nation as a whole or even the majority of religion. It is both personal and impersonal, conservation and destruction, belief and disbelief, as well as it has the universal element of faith. Faith creats facts. Facts enrich religion. In India, religion is meant no formal dogma embodied in an institution but the realization and appropriation of God. This is to be achieved through *sadhana,* devotion and practice.

Religion can be explained as a revelation; it is an experience, and demands nothing less than the ultimate unification of life on which order it has its own supreme contact. It treats death as a chapter of life in itself. That is why, *dharma,* as a concept in India, is the essence of religion. Whatever upholds life or its value is religion.[113] The word *dharma*[114] has perhaps a more clear concept than the term religion. It is, according to Indian thought, that which accomplished the wellbeing of mankind here as well as hereafter. It leads to the

113. Religion and 'dharma' are almost interchangeable expressions. Dharma is nothing but the basic principles of right conduct. The word 'dharma' is derived from the root 'dhr', to hold, means that which sustains a thing and maintains it in being. Every form of lives every group of men has its 'dharma' which is the law of its being. Indian masters, therefore, have divided syllabi of studies into four major divisions (1) *Dharma*—Law and Equality; (2) *Artha*—Politico-Economic Sciences; (3) *Karma*—Enjoyment of life; and (4) *Moksha*—Renouncing desire to find emancipation. These elements were shared under different nomenclatures by the orthodox as well as the heterodox teachers of India.

114. The term 'dharma' as described by Monier Williams is "that which is firmly established, steadfast, decrees....ordinance, laws, virtue, morality, and religion" (Sanskrit English Dictionary, Oxford). Radhakrishnan says "Dharma gives coherence and direction to different activities of life. It is the complete rule of life, the harmony of the whole man who finds a right and just law of his living. Each man and group, each activity and sour, mind, life, and body has its *dharma*" (Eastern Religion and Western Thought, London). Three different pathways are open to us for attaining this aim, namely, *'jnana'* or wisdom, *'bhakti'* or devotion and *'karma'* or service. The theory of 'karma' is closely linked with the theory of 'punar janma' or re-birth. These are not exclusive but emphasize the dominent aspect only. Since dharma is trans individual, no social contact is necessary, harmony is attained when everyone follows his own *dharma.* According to Aristotle man "may not be good citizen by nature", but according to Hindu tradition, man's essence being a part of the universal spirit, he can dissolve the conflict by remembering his own *dharma* and achieve the identity of a good man and a good citizen. The equilibrium established by *dharma* rests on the interdependence of all individuals who have to realise their rights and responsibilities.

way of life which is loving towards all living beings. It covers all morality, art, science and philosophy but transcends them all. It is action which includes contemplation and meditation that generate action. The bond that links the religious mind throughout the length and breadth of the land is *sakti*, which finds its spontaneous expression in *bhajan* or *kirtan* or religious love lyrics.

Among all the great religions of the world there is none more catholic, more assimilative than the mass of beliefs which go to make up what is popularly known as Hinduism. In its earlier stages Hinduism was known as Brahmanism, which in course of many centuries, has gone through changes and reformations. To what was probably its original form nature worship in a large degree introduced by the Aryan missionaries has been added an enormous amount of demonolatry, fetishism and kindred forms of primitive religion, much of which has been adopted from different races. The Aryan people were nature worshipper. But all the elements of nature worship which exist in India today are not the contribution of these people alone. The different races which inhabited the land before the advent of the Aryans also adorned the different phenomena of the nature in some way or other.[115] The subsequent Hindu religion did not follow the entirety of the Vedic tradition which was carried by the Aryans, was transformed to Neo-Hinduism. Therefore, the character of the nature worship in India possesses diverse elements which are at time irreconcilable. Sometime the Vedic nature cult has merged into the alien cultures though instances of independent borrowing are there.[116]

Nature-worship in one form or another is the first entirely clear emergence of a religion which adores. In nature-worship men began with what they saw first and knew best. Heaven, Earth, Rain, Thunder, Water, Sea, Fire, Sun and Moon furnishes humanity's first pantheon.[117] The Rain-god has always been sure of worshippers. Because rain fertilises the land. Cloud-god, Thunder-god, Wind-god come up together, fill the zenith with their tumult and disappear. But the Sun dies not, disappears not, and it has all that contains firmament.[118] These forces of the upper air thus tend to become the

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115. Atkins, Gaius Glenn and Charls Samuel Braden *Procession of the Gods*, Harper & Brothers, New York, 3rd rev. edn. 1948.

116. Ayer, C. P. Ramswami *Fundamenatls of Hindu Faith and Culture*, Madras, 1959.

117. Atkins, Gaius Glenn et al, op. cit.

118. The sun-god changed its name from place to place but never essentially changed its nature. The comrades of the sun in the sky becomes the comrades of sun-god in temples and shrines. The belief is universal that ruling families have descended from the sun.

ministers of a vaster, more inclusive divinity; the Sky-god absorbs them all.

Earth-worship is as old as sky. While Father Sky was a longway off, Mother Earth was left friendly and near. Earth-worship shades of into border regions which tax the learning and interpretative ingenuity of specialists.[119] Then there is tree-worship, it is a kind of primitve worship. There has been a marvelous growth of mythology,[120] folklore and poetry on tree-worship. Tree worship has been intimately associated with serpent-worship. All these we have seen in our earlier works like that of the "Rain in Indian Life and Lore," 1963, and the "Tree Symbol Worship in India", 1966 and in other's works and dissertations. It should not be out of place to mention that the popular elements are not arbitrary or isolated facts but are based on deep-rooted historic basis. They hint forgotten age when life was so different from ours.

We quote Asutosh Bhattacharya in this connection who while discussing the basis of Bengali folk culture said "The different races of humanity which entered India in pre-historic times by the North-East of this sub-continent must have had passed through Bengal at one time. It can however be easily imagined that they not only passed through this country, but also lived in it until they were driven out of their settlements subsequently by more powerful invading races because Bengal has got her natural attraction. In medieval India there was a saying which meant that there was a way in, but no way out of Bengal. This was also true in pre-historic times....It only naturally follows that each race left its own mark not only physical but also cultural which collectively formed the basis of the future higher culture. This is the reason why so many variants, sometimes antagonistic to one another, occur in the elements of subsequent cultural life of Bengal. It will be seen that sun-god is worshipped here in not only half a dozen names and characters, but also in the same number of different methods,... ..Therefore it will be seen that the culture of the people at large of a country which is recognised as civilised verges on primitivism. The average man is a primitive man notwithstanding

119. Atkins, Gaius Glenn and Charles Samuel Braden op. cit.

120. Myth is not symbolic, it is a direct expression of the subject matter, a narrative resurrection of a primeaval reality told in satisfaction of deep religious wants, moral carvings, social submissions, assertions, even practical requirements said by Malinowsky in his book entitled "Myth in Primitive Psychology", London, 1926. Myth is then a form of thought rather than intution, it is somewhat akin to meaningful dream experience. A mythical phenomena means materialization of some event or metamorphosis of some concrete material form as it is called in the Vedic mythology.

his vanity of civilization. ... It will be seen from the study of folk-culture how the higher Hindu gods representing abstract qualities of different aspects of spiritual life have been converted to answer the day-to-day practical needs of Bengalee rural folk. The supreme god in primitive religion is no abstract idea, but a physical being who renders the greatest practical service to humanity. This is illustrated by Siva, the Supreme God of the Bengalee peasants. Though the nomenclature of the God has been borrowed from higher Hinduism, it has little or no bearing upon the ideals of any higher religious doctrine.

Notwithstanding the wide prevalence of caste system, imported through higher Hindusm, the folk religion of Bengal has contributed a great deal in maintaining her social integrity. People irrespective of caste and creed assemble in the same congregation to offer worship to the deities representing serpent, tiger, small pox, cholera etc."[121]

The growth and development of Hinduism is found in the sacred books. The Vedas, which consist of over a thousand hymns, addressed to many nature Gods. The next stage in the development of Hinduism is representated by the Brahmanas, which are commentaries on the Vedas and in them nature worship is gradually transformed into a complex and theistic vision of the universe.[122] The third stage revealed in the Upanishads, which were written down in books but were still reserved for an inner circles of the upper castes. Though Hinduism has developed through many changes since the creation of the Rigveda, some of its basic ideas and beliefs have remained constant throughout the centuries in all the religious sects and groups. As for example, the Vaishnavas of the south and north, and Saktas, Saivas etc. sects of the great Hindu religion believe in one Supreme God of love and grace. They also believe in the individuality of every soul, believe in the salvation through *bhakti* and reverence to the Guru. All these, it is no wonder, have great influence in the formation of characters of Hindu men and women.

One finds an appropriate formula for everything. Every kind of disease, bad dreams, evil eye, to win one's love, to strengthen any failing power for children and the power to beget them as well as for compelling and stopping of rain, the lucky face of the dire, good work or sin, there are code of conduct. Here there are some wholly immoral association of every possible need and deed with some supernatural power. They are outstanding characteristic of Hindu religion. It invests every aspect of Hindu life and living. There are

121. Bhattacharya, Asutosh, "The Basis of Bengali Folk Culture", *Folklore* Calcutta, January-February, 1960.

122. Atkins, Gaius Glenn and Charles Samuel Braden op. cit.

Hindu beliefs that there are gods in everything. The influence of outstanding teachers and leaders has often redirected the currents of leaders. Therefore, we see the appearance of Jainism.

Ahimsa, 'no-injury' or 'reverence of life' is the key word of Jainism. The fundamental assumptions are *nirvan* and Right Conviction, Right Knowledge and Right Conduct. Naturally the men and women of this faith are more religious minded who are wealthy too as well. They come mainly from the business community and have been treated here.

Everybody knows that history of India is a history of congruity and cohesion from Vedic age to Buddhist period. Buddhist period is now known as an ancient period of India. India's history has gradually been much complicated than what it was in the earlier periods. The real history of India can be had from the social and religious study.

Buddhist period is the golden age of Indian history. It is placed in between the Vedic period and Brahmanic period. In the ancient period there were frequent clashes with the people and each group was jealous to the other. In the pre-historic period proto-Australoid people spread their culture far and wide through Indian and Pacific Oceans. In those days war happened in close succession for everything. They also were engaged in interstate disputes. The Bhil women, who belong to the aboriginal group of people and claims themselves as one of the early settlers of India, were found helping their husbands in facing enemies. They also participated in wars armed with slings which we know from T. B. Mukherjee's book "Interstate Relations in Ancient India", 1967. It is during the Buddhist period that the kind wars, battles and conflicts were channelised to one direction owing to the approach of oneness of Buddhism. The evils of war like bloodshed, treachery, arson, loot and other inhuman activities got a check from the natural reaction against war and a yearning for peace. In the Brahmanic period enemies created dissensions amongst allies. Taking some aspect of Rigvedic civilisation and Buddhist ideas the pan-Hindu civilization come into existence.[123] There

123. Mohenjodaro and Harappa were highly developed civilization in 3rd millionium B.C. During the period of Vedic civilization people lived on agriculture and cattle breading, supplemented with hunting. Later on Aryans infiltrated into the fertile soil of India and formed tribunal states. There were disputes then on such issues as cattle, water-right, women etc. Nevertheless, idea in regard to peace and amity was also found there in Rigveda. In the Brahmanic age enemies created dissensions amongst allies. In order to disunite them some Aryan joined non-Aryan against Aryans. In the Ramayana period there was bid for universal sovereignty. In the Mahabharata times the concept of sovereignty was clear. In Dharmashastra's time dynamics of expansion took place. In the age of Purana hostilites came into existence. At the time of Buddha India was divided into a

are gulf of difference between the Vedic period and Brahmanic period in rities, rituals, behaviours and practices. The idea of universal soveriegnty was felt from the craving of peace, progress and prosperity which lead some individual or group to live amicably and peacefully. But the idea of expansion and preservation of one's territory along with expansion of one's self was there.

The period between Pusymitra of the Sunga Dynasty and Harsavardhana of Kanauj—185 B.C. to A.D. 648—may be aptly called the period of Vedic renaissance. On the cultural plane Patanjali heralds Brahmanic period and Sankracharya terminated it. The Buddhist culture that had entered a defensive phase with Kaniska on the political plane and Nagarjuna and Asvaghosa on the cultural plane began to show signs of decadence with the rise of the Guptas.[124]

The Gupta period marked by religious toleration of all faiths, creeds and cults. The pro-Brahmanic kings not only encouraged Buddhism along with Sakta and Durga cults but also others with the same amount of regard they had for their own. This catholicity, noble in itself, resulted in the growth of sectarianism within Hinduism repercussions of which later proved fatal to Hindu culture. Some of the sects and cults that emerged in this period sanctioned indulgences—wine, meat and women as sacred. It had at its helm libertine bhikhus and by the transformation of Mahayana into Mantrayana and later into Vajrayana which, in the line with Tantricism, extolled sex indulgence.[125]

Buddhism is a religion of introspection, rennuciation and compassion. In no other religion of the world so much strain is laid of the duty to find peace in one's own mind which is also effective for the women belonging to Buddhism and this we will see later.

About 1000 A.D. the followers of Mohammad, using the Pass which the Aryans trod atleast 2000 years before them, invaded India and spread throughout the Peninsula. These people canvassed and caused

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number of petty principalities and there was no strong government. Thus Buddha's clarion call for being united in one principal was partial successful. The Indus valley civilization discloses types of thoughts and culture which might have been the forerunner of later developments which came to be known as Hinduism at a much later age. The link between Vedism and the great epics and Puranas may be said to be slender, not only in the spheres of mythology and religion, but also in several other domains. It may be that Vedism, which was mostly priest-ridden culture was grafts later on the prevailing types of religious thought. The bond between mythico-religious consciousness and linguistic thought is that the verbal structures appears as entities endowed with mythical power.

124. Altekar, A. S. op. cit.

125. ibid.

to cover larger surface for Mohammadism in India and there are considerable number of the believers of their religion. It is the Arabs who first introduced Islam in India. The Islamic conquest, began with the conquest of Sindh by Mohammad bin Kasim in A.D. 712. The impact of Islam became serious with the installation of Muslim power by Shahabuddin Ghori in A.D. 1193. It assumed a threatening and everpowering force to Hindu culture under Allaudin Khilji in the early 14th century, when Islam began to unfold and expand in India. Its universal quality is expressed in the belief that it is an eternal religion. This religion announces that there is no God, but *Allah* and its development was within the historical period.[126] Their attitude towards the womenfolk was materialistic. It is they who popularised *purdah* system in India. More details on it will be had later.

The Hindu catholicity had divided the Hindus into various sectarian groups, none of which had the strength to unite. The growing rigidity of the caste-groups tended to accentuate exclusiveness under the spell of which the Hindus failed to evaluate the danger of Islam. In a word, Hindu reactions to the Islamic conquest were retreat, despair and defeatism. The despairing spirit of the Hindus on the one hand sought consolation in the philosophy which taught the nothingness of life, and, on the other, revealed in the erotic devotional songs on the lives of Radha and Krishna or Krishna and the Gopis. This defeatist attitude, helped to bear the cruelty of social system in hide-bound restrictions. On the other hand the Brahmanic attitude towards the lower-castes forced the latter to embrace Islam. These new converts to Islam proved to be more ferocious and more tyrannous to Hindu culture than were the Muslims themselves. Still then they have adopted certain local customs, superstitions etc. which have seperated them from their brethern of the land of origin of religion. So we have included an article on Muslim women and not on the native Christians.

After the Muslim conquest a few intrepid Zorostrain sought refuge in India who are known as Parsis. Polygamy is allowed among them as it is also permitted with the Muslims. Purity in thoughts, words, and deeds, implies the wills to do good, and to made men better fiitted to contribute happiness of human society are their motto.

In the later part of the fifteenth century Guru Nanak organised a movement which has since come to be known as Sikh movement. Like Islam, it is monotheistic and non-idolartous in its worship and somewhat akin to it in the militancy which made it for a time strong contender for the rule of all India. Sikhism has also developed out of

126. Gaer, Joseph *The Wisdom of the Living Religions*, Skeffington, London, 1958;

Hinduism with a distinct belief in Guru. It does not renounce worldly activities. A Sikh believes implicity in teachings of the Guru. Their service comprises the ringing of bells, blare instruments, chantings of hymns and waving of lights before Adi Granth. An article on Sikh women is added here which will speak of their womenfolk.

From the nineteenth century onward there appeared all over India a number of Hindu saints who tried to preach equality of all, irrespective of caste or creed. These saints, who were devout worshippers of personal God, Rama or Gauranga, had immense appeal for the masses. As these saints came from different castes, including Sudras, and at times even untouchables, distinctions of castes seemed to recede into the background for the timebeing. Again, they not only accepted the social order which recognised social injustice in terms of caste and sex, but being devout Hindus submitted themselves to persecution in the name of that social order. They were also absorbed with the goal of attaining oneness with life on earth. They did not bother about the rightness or wrongness of the social order in which they were brought up and which they were taught to accept as sacrosant. A critical reader will find more facts on Hindu women here.

The modern age of exploration and expansion took Christianity in its Roman Catholic form into India. The beginning of the nineteenth century saw a much more vigorous penetration by Protestant Christianity. This meeting of Christianity and Hinduism produced a number of new movements which while considered still to be within Hinduism, nevertheless, bear many characteristics of the imported Christain faith. Most notable of these were *Brahma Samaj* of Bengal which was founded by Raja Rammohun Roy in 1833.

All these different religious faiths and movements including the teachings of the prevailing folk religion among the vast majority of Indian masses have made the status and position of India's women complicated and varied. By the word Indian women, we mean the women of different castes, communities, sects and linguistic groups who practice different forms of religious faiths and perform such rites and rituals that are sanctioned either by their respective religious faiths or by folk religion. Then by the term'Indian women' one should not accept the women of upper class only, it also include the women of the lower classes, who helped their men in crafts like spining, weaving, making of baskets and could do out door work side by side with male members of the family in the field, factory or elsewhere.

(To be continued)

Notice

The page no. of the first forma of this issue will be 275 to 282 instead of what have been printed there.

S. S. Bhattacharya

THE MIZO WAREARE

It is a contribution for better understanding to the Mizo Warfare in recent times. The contributor has made field investigation and the fruits of that research is seen in the present paper. Until now the Mizo problem have been but scarcely appreciated. The contributor has given hints to some points which should be considered before taking decisions and it would also be necessary to make further observations to decide how far the point raised by the contributor stands right.

'Hit and run' is the secret of the warfare of the tribes of the Mizo Hills district, especially the Lushais—now known as the Mizos. The Mizos, some of whom have recently gone hostile by repeating their old tactics of atrocity, have consequently been successful to draw the attention of the security forces of India, possess the qualities of a war-like people as they are physically well-built, sturdy and hardworking people. The warfare of the Mizos may be termed as guerilla or skirmish in the hills and jungles where the Mizos take advantage from the local conditions and physical features for the tactics of their stategy. The land of the Mizos is characterized by rough mountain slopes and dissected by countless torrents and rivulets. The Valleys made by these streams are covered by a thick growth of monsoon jungle in which ferocious wild animals and insects are found in abundance. All these factors exert immense influence on the character of the Mizos. Incumbent by the natural surroundings, the Mizos build their houses on the top of the mountain ridges which are sometimes fortified by stockades of heavy bamboo-logs and other fancing material. Furthermore, the state of continuous insecurity and constant struggle against the odds has made the Mizos stubborn and aggressive and these have added peculiar wit to their technique and tactics of warefare.

For numerous causes, the Mizos launch war against their enemy. It is not always the dislike of any tribe or its actions that lead the Mizos to indulge in violent activities but sometimes an internal quarrel with a tribe or for the fulfilment of a selfish desire is sufficient for their assault and outrages. According to O'Malley "A private quarrel with a neighbouring clan, a scarcity of women and domestic servants,

and the consequent necessity of procuring a requisite number of captives to supply the wants of the tribes, the simple desire of plunder or of obtaining heads to grace the obsequises of some departed chieftain, were the principal causes which led to the commission of these raids."

After planning the place and time of a war, the leader of the tribes, sends his spear or a wand or a fighting *dao* (a long, broad and uncovered sword) with different indications on it from village to village to collect his men. The signs on these objects are so meanigful that they serve as indicators to the tribesmen as to what kind of war they are going to wage, what weapons they should carry with them and what punishment would be falling on them if they defy the order or make themselves absent. Lewin, T. H., a vetern on the Mizo's warfare, elaborating a detail description on the different methods adopted by the chief to collect his men mentions that "to collect his people, or impact to authenticate any order, the chief's spear, which is usually covered and ornamented is sent by a messenger from village to village. *dao,* to which a piece of red cloth is attached. Another method is by the *'phurori'*, which is a species of wand made out of strips of peeled bamboo, about two inches long in this shap. If the tips of the cross pieces be broken, a demand for black-mail is indicated ; a rupee to be levied for each break. If the end of one of the cross-pieces is charred it implies urgency, and that the people are to come even by torch-light. If a capsicum be fixed on to the 'phurori', it signifies that disobedience to the order will meet with punishment as severe as the capsicum is hot. If the cross-piece is of cane, it means that disobedience will entail corporal punishment."

The tribes as soon as see the messenger of their chief with the indicators begin to assemble at the latter's court. If the message be a hostile one, i.e., the chief wants a raid to be carried on to the enemy. the people come with their arms, such as flint-licks, tower-muskets, spears, daos, bows, arrows, panjis (bamboo spikes) and the guns. The Mizos used to have the guns through their raids on the British officials and subjects.

Before starting for a raid each man is provided with his food consisting of cooked rice, to continue for several days, the people ran down their food very tightly into pices of bamboo, so that it may not be wasted on the way of their march. They carry their water in a section of bamboo. They cut the bamboo just above one joint and just below the joint a hole is made and cut the bamboo at the next joint. They plug the bamboo with a roll of leaves so that the water may not come out through the hole.

In this way, after full preparations, the Mizos set out for their

warfare or raids. The raiding party consists of a chief, his sons and the men-folk of the tribes. No women and children are included in the party. The party, very cautiously, walk during the darkness of the night and passing through the deep jungles and difficult and different terrains reach their destination before the dawn. The Mizos never advance openly. They send forward their scouts to make sure the unawareness of their enemy. If the enemy is found alert, the Mizo quickly retreat without attack. Otherwise, the Mizos surround the place of their attack and advance on the enemy. The chief always remain behind and shouts 'forward', 'forward'. The men quickly fall on their enemy and ransaking the village, killing the men, women and children, then hurriedly retreat with as much loot as possible along with the captives mostly the damsels and boys. The raid is carried out so rapidly that sometimes the chief does not get a chance to kill any of his enemies by his own hands.

After the raid, the raiding party in fear of any organised attack by the enemy walk on as fast as possible and never stops until the destination is reached. They also stop after the completion of 48 hours' journey. If any one of the captives cannot keep pace with them, he or she is killed on the way and his or her head is being carried away to the village for ornamentation.

The chief of the raiding party after reaching his village orders for a grand festival to celebrate the success of the raid. The festival starts with the killing of a captive by the chief's son to prove his bravery. In this celebration, generally, the women captives are not killed, but most of the men captives are slaughtered, and the rest are kept alive as slaves.

Another characteristic of the warfare of the Mizos' is ambush. The Mizos make the ambush, generally by the side of the road or path through which they expect their enemy. The ambush is so serious that the Mizos get their enemy, sometimes, quite unprepared, and then making a great slaughter on them and loot disappear quickly down the hills through the deep jungle ignoring all sorts of danger. Lt. Col. Shakespear giving his experience of the ambush observes that "these ambushes were always arranged below the road, where the ground fell away very sharply, and, having fired, the brave fellows hurled themselves down the hill ignoring all cuts and scratches in their anxiety to escape."

Sometimes, the Mizos put spikes on the way of their enemy. They make the spikes from the bamboo and closely fix them on the ground so that the pointed tips of the spikes remain two inches to a few feet above the ground. The Mizos drive their enemy towards these spikes

and kill every one of them as the latter cannot move forward through the pointed and poisonous spikes.

The only thing the Mizos fear mostly is an artillery atack on them. During the British rule in India, the Mizos carried out their countless attacks on the British officials and subjects, but they could not oppose strongly any of the British military expeditions that entered into their hills and punished them heavily as they always feared the heavy-hands.

With the introduction of the guns and Missionaries in the Mizo Hills district the whole strategy of the Mizos' warfare has gone under tremendous changes. This transformation from savage to modern has occurred during the past few years. The guns have added fresh strength to their power, and the Missionaries have provided them new hope and illusions to maintain it.

From the observations made above it becomes crystal clear that the Mizos, with their tacties and strategy, are not expected at all to fight out the security forces in the Mizo Hills district. Then how is that the Mizos still hold command over a large part of the Mizo Hills district against the wishes of the security forces? In searching out the matter it becomes evident that it is neither the guns nor Missionaries but Pakistanis, Communists and Chinese indulgence and sympathies to the cause of the rebel Mizos that are mainly responsible for the continued conflict. It is an open secret that the Mizos are getting intensive military training centres such as Kasalong, Barkal, Bandarban and Rumaguard with the headquarters at Rangamati, all in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, which the Pakistan Government wants, to bargain with the rebel Mizos for its present support to the later. In these training centres, the Mizos get adequate training for the artillery and guerilla warfare with the modern and autometic weapons. After completing the training the Mizos smuggle the weapons into their own centres by giving slips to the security forces. Until this secret flow of arms to the Mizo is not stopped; the entire boundary of the Mizo Hills district is not sealed off; identify cards are not issued to all the people of the Mizo Hills district and other scientific methods and deviced (see my paper 'Strategy of the Mizo Hills District) are not taken to stop the illegal boundary crossing; the security forces will never have the upperhands to deal strongly with the warfare in the Mizo Hills district.

READ

HUMAN EVENTS

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SOME MOHAMMADAN CUSTOMS

SOME Mohammadan customs are described here. These are ancient customs but a great many of these are still available among the Musalmans at Muzaffarpur and its neighbourhood in Bihar. No doubt, owing to rapid change some of these customs have and are getting changed and modified. The customs traeated here are as old as the Musalman race. Similar customs have also been recorded in 'North Indian Notes and Querries' as early as 1895.

Recitation of Amin

In a Mahammadan family where there are members who can read and write, it is the fashion, when a child is born, for the teacher of the child's father or of the family to be sent for to say *Amin*. Accordingly, the said teacher brings all the boys from his school to the house where the child has been born, and there they recite aloud some verses, some of which are given below. At the end of each verse all the children in corus shout out with one voice, the word *Amin*. Then the parents or relations give to the teacher such reward as they can afford in money or kind. This practice is not one enjoyed by the law; it is in the nature of a congratulation and felicitation. There is no fixed month or day for it; but it is carried out not long after the birth. The verses are these

1. Hamad ast Khuda re O salwat mustaffa re Har mir, har gada re Subhan mi rani	Eng: Praise is for God Prayers to the Pure one, Let prince and pauper Shout "Praise the Lord".
2. Allah be-nazire Ghaffar, dastgiri Sultan be waziri Subhan mi rani	Eng: God He is peerless, Forgiving, helpful A king without counselor Shout "Praise the Lord."
3. Bubarkar, yar-i-ghar ast, Kan-yar, gham-kusar ast, O har ahdae yar ast Subhan mi rani	Eng: Burbarkar, a bosom friend He is the sorrow-dispeller, ... Shout "Preaise the Lord".

4. Utmre kin bud adil, U adal gir o hasil, U rast nur-nazil, Subhan mi rani	Eng : Umr, who was just a man And a claimer of Justice, Just, given of light Shout "Praise the Lord"
5. Usman ibni Affan U jama kard Kuran Mi-khwand az dil o jan Subhan mi rani	Eng : Usman son of Aflan Gathered together the Kuran Read it with heart and soul Shout "Praise the Lord."
6. Haidar kin bud safdar Bar kunad babi khabar Salar Shah Haidar Subhan mi rani	Eng : Haidar, who was a hero, Uproots the gate of knowledge Salar Shah, the lion-hearted Shout "Praise the Lord."
Rasmi i tarab mihadi Dast i karm kushadi Bada hameshah shadi Bolo, "Hazar amin".	Eng : Start the joyful sounds, Put forth the hand of mercy, Be for ever happy Call aloud "So be it.
Ustad ghar par ae Larkon ko sath lae Dast-i-du ia uthae Bolo, "Hazar amin"	Eng : Teacher has come to the door, With him has brought his boys Raised his hand to blis Call aloud "So be it".
9. Khilat mangao bhari Khatir ho khush hamari De khne ke khalk sari Bolo, "Hazar amin"	Eng : Send for *arich* robe May my heart be gladdened, Let all the beholders Called aloud "so be it".
10. Larkah ko dada aen Tashrif yahan pah laen Nazaren mere mangaen Bolo, "Hazar amin"	Eng : The grandfather comes He honours this spot He sends for my presents, Call aloud "so be it".
11. Hathi do, ya kih ghora Jo kunkh kih do bhi thora La ashrfi ka tora Bolo, "Hazar amin."	Eng : Give he an elephant or horse Whether it be, it is too little Bringout the bags of gold Call aloud "so be it".
12. Allah hamen parahate, Hathi upar charhate Dushman mera ghatate Bolo, "Hazar amin."	Eng : It is the Lord that teaches us Lifts us up to ride on elephants Brings low my enemy, Call aloud "so be it".

The Custom of Bismillah

On the day when a child is four years, four months and four days old, the people of the brotherhood, with other relations and friends, are called together through the *Mirasi* (professional singer) or the *Hajam*

(barbar). The message sent is : "At so-and-so's house there is today a *Bism-illah.* Accordingly, at the appointed time, all those invited assemble. The child, having been bathed and clothed in handsome new clothes, is brought into the midst of the gathering. Then some old man of wisdom and learning, makes the child repeat the words "bism-illah, arrahman, ur-rahim" (in the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful). When the child has said the whole of these words, all the company turn to the father, the brother, or other head of the household, and congratulate him. The words of the above *ayat* are engraved on a small tablet of silver, of the weight of one or two rupees. After the child has repeated the words, he hands this tablet, by way of reward, to the old man after whom he has said the words. It is not found that the performence of this ceremoncy at the age of four years four months and our days is prescribed the religious laws. But it is possible that the practice arose for the purpose of fixing a day for commencing the child's education. Otherwise, there seems no reason for adhearing to four years, four months and four days exactly. On the day of this ceremony, small presents are also given to the servants and dependents of the house.

Circumcision

Circumcision (*Khatnah*) is incumbent on every male Mohammadan by the law of his religion. It is carried out by all classes. When the boy is seven or eight years of age, a date is fixed and all relations and friends far and near are informed. It is treated as an important ceremony and much trouble and expenses are naturally associated on it Singers and dancers are hired, food is prepared, both for the guests and for distribution is charity. A poor boy is allowed to go about as usual without the wound to heal. It heals in a week or ten days. Rich people and those of the middle classes make elaborate preparations. In the afternoon of the appointed day, all the relations and brethern assemble at the house. A chair is placed on a fixed place and on this the boy is seated. In towns and cities a man who is expert in the operation removes the membrance in the twinkling of an eye. Some boys of soft nature cry, others of their own accord seat themselves, smiling, upon a chair. As the cut is made the operator shouts "Din, Din, Muhammad". The assembly then offer their congratulations. If the operator is the barbar belonging to the house, he places a small *brass saucer,* such as, barbars use, in the centre of the room. All guests between whom and the master of the house there is interfamily adds to it according to his means. The family barbar takes the change of gifts on such occasions place in the saucer. The head of the

money. If the operator is not a family barbar, a seperate gift is made to him, say an *ashrfi* (a gold coin) or according to means of the performer. Sweetmeats, in the form of *batasha* or *zilapi*, are next distributed. Some families for the relations, sometime organise a public entertainment of singing and dancing. The women are entertained inside by *Domni* and other singers and dancers. The guests are fed choice food. A rich man usually will prolong the feast to four or five days but ordinary people keep it confine one for two days only. But men of sense, strict in their religion, fix a day, invite no one, have the boy circumcised, pay the operator, and refrain from other luxirious expenditure on singing, dancing and other things prohibited by the Mohammadan religion. No doubt, the general body of wealthy Mohammadans who have no sufficient learning or sense, nor feel bound by their law. but are plunged in the sea of ostentation, spend readily huge money on such occasions, and in the end find their hands become empty. They send letters on red paper in all directions. On the day fixed, there is a stampede (*dhawah*) to the house each invited guest arriving followed by all his return. Over an archway a place for the band has been prepared (a *nauhat-khana*) and for four or five days the kitchen fires are incessantly alight.

Mensturation

Before conclusion it may not be out of place to say a few words about observances connected with the mensturation. Among the Mohammadans there menstural impurity lasts for three days. During this period the woman does her household work, but engages in no religious ceremonies. While in this state she is prohibited from fasting (Roza or the kind observance). The impurity is ended by putting on clean clothes. There appear to be no special observances among orthodox Mohammadans in connection with first mensturation of a girl. Low class Mohammadans who are mainly of Hindu extraction follow the usual rules enforced among Hindus of the same rank in life. On this Dr. Haughes wrote in the 'Dictionary of Islam' that "during the period of mensturation woman are not permitted to say their prayers or to touch or read the Quaran or enter a mosque, and are forbidden to their husbands. But it is related in the traditions that Mohammad abrogated the law of Moses which let a mensturous woman apart for seven days", and Amar says, that when Jews heard this said "This man opposes our customs in everything".

This is a short note on certain Mohammadan custom which are still in force but due to complicated and industrial life some of these customs have been simplified and shortend in keeping with the tone of the day.

BOOK-REVIEW

FOLKLORE OF WOMEN, As Illustrated by Legendary and Traditionary Tales, Folk-Rhymes, Proberbial Sayings, Superstitions, Etc. by Thiselton-Dyer, T. F. London Elliot Stock, 1966, 253 pages. Cited in Sonnenschein *The Best Books* 3rd Edition Reissued by Singing Tree Press, a division of the Gale Research Company, Detroil Michigan, 1968. L. C. 68-24475. $9.50.

This important book is now available as part of Singing Tree Press's series on Folklore and Mythology.

Brahmins were forbiden to marry red-headed women and Chinese folklore has it that beautiful women are unlucky. Is either prejudice justified? Thiselton-Dyer avoided making judgments in favour of simply recording thousands of legends, customs, and superstitions about such matters as woman's love, her ficklessness, curiosity, will-power, talkativeness sdress, and tears. From where the author has compiled such items are not referred in the book item by item but in the preface he has given the names of some books that he had consulted.

Daughterhood, widowhood, and motherhood, he shows, have all been the subjects of innumerable stories and beliefs, from the West African story about a father who required his daughter's suitors to empty a brook with a nutshell, to a cynical German saying that "a rich widow weeps with one eye and laughs with the other."

Given the subject, it is no matter for wonder that even folklore is confusing. The author refuses to spare us contradictions. Whom do we believe the English who say that "the man who would thrive must trust his wife" or the Africans who maintain that "a man who confides secrets to his wife will be led to the path of Satan"? The book containes many more details about the character, power, position, status etc. of the womenfolk in general in twentysix chapters. It is an important book where one will find proverbial wisdom of human race in its teachings of woman's character. It is a wonderful book and we will be glad to see it in every respectable library.

ANTHROPOLOGY AND ARCHAEOLOGY, *Essays in Commemoration of Verrier Elwin,* Edited by M. C. Pradhan, R. D. Singh, P. K. Misra and D. B. Sastry., Oxford University Press, Bombay, Demy, 328 p. 1969 Rs. 30.00.

The book is a collection of fifteen essays of which two (Verrier Elwin as Anthropologist, Some Aspects of the Jat Religion and Ethics) are

written by Dr. M. C. Pradhan, one of the editors when the other three editors have no contribution. The remaining contributions are—Frank Fernandez (A Critique of Verrier Elwin's Anthropology : Hill Bondo Social Organization and Kinship Analysis), H. R. H. Prince Peter (Patterns of Polyandry in Tibet and India), P. G. Ganguly (Separatism in the Indian Polity : a case study), Beatrice Diamond Miller (Revitalization Movements : Theory and Practice, as evidenced among the Buddhists of Maharashtra), Kathleen Gough (Political Party Conflict in a Kerala Village), Harold A. Gould (A Theory of Social Stratification and the Case of Indian Society), Christoph Von Furer-Haimendorf (Morality and Prestige among the Nagas), John V. Ferreira (Finitude, Complementarity and Dependence in Primitive Societies), Francis L. K. Hsu (Christianity and the Anthropologist), Stephen Fuchs (Applied Anthropology in India), Norman Zide and R. D. Munda (Descriptive Dialogue Songs in Mundari), in Social Anthropology section. In the Prehistoric Archaeology Section there are the following articles D. Sen's Pebble Chopper Chopping tools and flakes in India and Pakistan etc. and V. N. Misara's Early village communities etc. It also contains twelve illustrations along with the frontispiece of Verrier Elwin.

The first part of the book begins with an assessment of Elwin's work. A fairly exhaustive Bibliography of Elwin's publication has also been added. Here one will find some added materials on Elwin's life which Elwin himself did not include in his "Tribal World". This anthology presents the creed of the anthropo-archaeological studies in India. Oxford University Press has rendered commandable service not only by publishing Elwin's books but also by the anthology under review which is valuable and curious. The book will be useful for future researchers. The most valuable part of the anthology is the bibliography for which M. C. Pradhan will receives the thanks of all who are interested in the study of Indian anthropology, archaeology and tribal study.

GAMBHIRA : LOKSANGEET-O-UTSAB : EKAL O SEKAL (In Bengali—Gambhira . Folksong and festival, by P. Ghosh, Chakra & Co., Calcutta-26 Demy 92 pagt with protos and notations etc. 1968. Rs. 5.00.

A well-produced book written by a college teacher in the Dept. of Bengali, Mr. Pradyot Ghosh. It has different sub-titles, such as, meaning of festival, place of festival, chronology of festival, social consciousness, social education, so on and so forth. The book also contains some notations in Indian style. The author has tried to introduce, Gambhira, a regional folk song and festival of Gaur Banga (Maldah district of West Bengal) in his book. We shall be glad if this book gets its place in the library.

FOLKLORE English Monthly, August 1969 Regd. No. C-420 R. N. 5539/60

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S. L. SRIVASTAVA

JIUTIA FESTIVAL: A RECONSIDERATION OF THE CONCEPT OF "GENERALIZATION"

In this apaper attempt has been made to examine the validity of the concept of "Generalization" on the basis *Jiutia* festival observed in village Barigaon of Gorakhpur District (eastern U. P.) and the fact presented in Sanskritic literature, and given by various scholars.

Morris E. Opler has tried to coin two terms 'Generalization' and 'Particularization' on the basis of calendaric festivals. Regarding 'generalization' he writes that in it the progression is from the specific to the more comprehensive. In it we start with the immediate, the personal, the present and move toward the timeless, the inclusive, the abstract.[1] In order to support his statement he has given the example of *Jiutia* festival. He writes, "Jiutia obviously has its impetus in the individual mother's concern for the well being of her son, and this personal interest is never entirely erased in the course of the rite....Nevertheless, in attempting to attain her goal, she moves far toward the merging of her need and her protective devices with those of others. She joins with the other women to go to worship at a sacred spot where one Brahman serves all who are there.....The ceremony has as its prime objective the placing of all the sons of all the women involved under the protection of Jiut Baba....Jiutia may have its psychological roots in the personal anxiety felt by the individual mother for her son, but through a process of generalization it has become a standard ritual means by which the whole community acts to safeguard its sons and to place them under the divine protection of a God who is the abstract essence of life itself"[2]

II

The festival of Jiutia falls on the 8th day of the dark-half of Kuar. Regarding this festival Morris E. Opler writes, "The name of the festival

and necklace is connected with the word for life (Jiu) and on this occasion Jiut Baba, a personification of life itself, is honoured and specially blesses male particularly sons of the family"[3]. Only the women with a son (sons) fast on this day and participate in the rites of this festival. They do not take even water during their fast of 24 hours. In the evening of this day they walk in a group to a tank at the outskirt of the village. Each carries a metal plate containing wet grams, *satanja* (grains of seven varieties), vermilion and *Jiutia* (necklace made of threads). After taking bath in the tank they place the gram, vermilion and the *Jiutia* under a wild plant known as *Bariar* representing god Jiutbandhan. Then they worship Jiutbandhan Maharaj while requesting him to protect their sons, and embrace the plant while uttering, "O Ariar O Bariar! My son may come beating others but not being beaten himself. O Ariar O Bariar !Tell Sita my regards". Afterwards all sit there to hear stories related to this festival. At the end of each story every woman says, "O Jiutbandhan Maharaj as you have helped her so help others". After the completion of the story-telling they fasten the Jiutia round their neck and return home to take rest during the night. Next day early in the morning *Bakhir* and *Puri* with pulse inside are prepared and offered first to the female ancestors of the house and then to other members of the family. Unlike the case observed by Opler in a north Indian village, in Barigaon no Brahman ever officiates throughout the whole rites of this festival.

III

This festival is also known as Jivit Putrikastami or Jivit Putrika Vrata. According to P. V. Kane this festival is celebrated to worship Jimutvahan, son of King Salivahana, by women for securing sons and *Saubhagya* (blessed wife-hood).[4] Regarding Salivahan Miss Karunakana Gupta writes, "As Dr. H. C. Ray Chaudhuri has pointed out, the Dvatrimsatputtalika represents Salivahan, the mythological representative of the Satvahana dynasty, as of mixed Brahmana and Naga origin (PHAI, p. 280)".[5] According to Kathasaritasagar[6] and Nagananda play,[7] Jimutvahan, son of Jimutketu was a king of Vidyadharas,[8] who offered his life in place of a young serpent Shankhchuda, who was by virtue of an agreement to be offered to Garuda as his daily meal. When Garuda came to know this fact he was very much induced by the generous and touching behaviour of Jimutvahan and decided to give up his practice of devouring serpents[9]. Then Garuda bringing nector from Vaikuntha sprinkled over Jimutvahan and he restored to life with no mark of injury. When asked by Garuda for boon, Jimutvahan requested him to return life to all the snakes whom he had eaten before and whose bones only remained. Thereupon Garuda said, "so it be". Then all the snakes who had been

eaten by Garuda and whose bones alone remained rose up unwounded and restored to life by the nector of Garuda's boon[10].

While discussing Jiutia festival Opler has mentioned about Jiut Baba, who according to him, is identified by many villagers and Lord Siva. But while collecting data for this study no respondent has tried to identify Jiutbandhan Maharaj with Lord Siva. Instead, the fast observing women say that he is not a synonym of any god, but he himself is an individual god. Again the description of Jimutvahan given in Sanskritic scriptures, the views of the people regarding Jiutbandhan Maharaj and the practical aspects of *Jiutia* festival observed in Barigaon enable us to say that Jimutvahan and Jiutbandhan are synoymn and both represents the name of one single god. Phonetically also the word Jimutvahan may take the form of Jiutbandhan.

N. M. Penzer writes that on the basis of a paper on the Nagas, C. F. Oldham points out that in most of the temples dedicated to Vasuki (king of the snakes, often mentioned in the ocean), or Basdeo, in the Chenab valley there is, besides the figure of the Naga Raja, representation of his Vezier, who is called Jimutvahan. 'Legend says that Basdeo was engaged in war with Garuda, and that, on one occasion, the Naga chief was surrounded by the enemy and had a narrow escape. In fact, he was saved only by the devotion of his minister, who gave his own life to save that of his master. This probably means that Jimutvahan was killed in covering the retreat of the Raja. Basdeo escaped to the Kailas Kund, a mountain lake some 13,000″ level above the sea, between the Chenab and Ravi Valley. Meantime, an army was raised by which Garuda was defeated. The Naga Raja, in his gratitude, ordered that in future Jimutvahan should be worshipped in the same temple with himself.'[11]

Worship of Jimutvahan along with the Nag Raj is substantiated by other sources also. P. Acharya has written that the canopy of the Anantesvara temple consists of seven snake-hoods and there are two Vidyadharis on back slab beyond the hood.... At both ends middle of the trifoliate arch a Rahumukha is carved and on each side of the Rahumukha there is one female figure riding on the flying Vidyadhara, a male figure. At the two Makara (corcodile) bases of the arch there are two images of Garuda.[12] This statement shows that in the temple of Anantesvara Vidyadharas are also represented. Jimutuvahan was the king of Vidyadharas. Thus the likelihood is that the Vidyadharas in the temple of Anantesvara are the representation of Jimutvahana.

IV

The facts given above show that Jimutvahan has sacrificed his life to protect Sankhchuda and the Nag Raj. He is worshiped along with Nag Raj and represented in the temple of Anantesvara. The descrip-

tion of the *Jiutia* festival observed in Barigaon show that women with son (sons) worship Jiutbandhan Maharaj (Jimutvahan) with the request to protect their sons and to bless them to be brave so that they may come home beating others but not being beaten themselves. The rites of *Jiutia* festival in Barigaon correspond to the mythological story of Jimutvahan and Sankhchuda. The congregation of mothers at the outskirt of the village near a tank to worship Jiutbandhan represent the congregation of all those snake mothers, who had heard that their sons have been revived because of Jimutvahan, at that place where Garuda used to get his food of snakes, to worship Jimutvahan and to bring back their revived sons. At the end of the worship of Jiutbandhan the fastening of *Jiutia* by the fasting women round their neck and coming back to home represent the snake-mothers' clinging their revived sons to their neck and coming back to home. These facts do not present any possibility to assume that the festival of *Jiutia* has its root in the personal anxiety felt by the individual mother for her son which through a process of generalization has become a standard ritual means by which the whole community acts to safeguard its sons and to place them under the divine protection of a God who is the essence of life itself. Instead they present the possibility to assume that this festival has its root in the collective consciousness of the women who reverently felt to worship Jimutvahan with this view that he might protect their sons as he has protected Sankhachuda, the only son of his parents, and the species of Nagas. Thus the theory of Opler behind the concept of 'Generalization' does not seem to be valid.

This theory may be refuted on other ground also. According to him *Jiutia* obviously has its impetus in the individual mother's concern for the wellbeing of her son or sons. But this festival is spread only in a particular area, i.e., in eastern U. P. The anxiety of all the mothers for the wellbeing of their son or sons is universal, then why it is not observed in other parts of India? This point has been ignored by Opler while discussing the concept of 'Generalization'. His theory points out that the festival of *Jiutia* is originated on the basis of some rational views. The anxiety of a particular mother for the well being of her son or sons directed her thought to collect other mothers and accompanying with them to worship a God who is the abstract essence of life in itself, which through a process of generalization has become a standard ritual means by which the whole community acts to safeguard its sons. In reality this theory is based only on one aspect i.e., psychological, while ignoring other aspects such as mythological and historical.

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S. K. AHUJA

ANTIQUITY OF NUPTIALS

The institution of marriage is as old as the history of mankind. The stabilizing effect that the wedlock has had in shaping man's social destiny can at no time be over-emphasised. It, in fact, may aptly be described as a very important social milestone in man's gregarious life. Today man gives little, if any, thought to the processes through which this institution, or better, custom, has passed and crystallized in its present form. It is, for instance, shocking for many of us to know that capture by force was the cardinal means of acquiring a companion that the primitive man adopted. Even the civilized world of as recent times as the beginning of the sixteenth century was shadowed by this odious custom. It indeed is an intellectually rewarding exercise to delve into the history of marriage.

Capture of women, along with looting and arson, appears to have been an appendage of the warring instinct of primitive man who perhaps was obliged to wage wars in the interest of survival. And, perhaps, the theory of the survival of the fittest, in its physical ramifications, proved itself in the world of the hoary man. From the belief that the captured women were the spoils of war and prizes of men's valour—often subjecting them to a life of slavery and promiscuity—slow evolutionary process of recognising the captured woman as a companion and wife took shape. Traditions really die hard and even to this day certain tribes in the inaccessible recesses of African jungles observe the essentials of this system, and even some of the more refined African societies stage mock captures which are inseparable from the ceremonies of marraige among them.

Rich heiresses in England in the early 16th century often risked themselves being captured and thus forced to marry against their will. Armed escorts trailed the rich beauties of France, Italy and Ireland to foil attempts of adbuction. The custom waned imperceptably in Europe and instances of its sporadic occurrances are to be found right up to the yester-century. No country of our globe, it is authoritatively claimed, has been exception to the operation of this custom. The Bible which portrays the life and custom of the ancient people, cites numerous instances of the practice of forcible seizures of women and virgins by invading warriors who later on granted them the status of wifehood.

Variations of the theme of marriage by force were in evidence of the social structure of almost all the countries of the world. From the abode of the primitive man in Africa and Australia to the sophisticated and

cultured man in England, the custom has held sway. Ample evidence is available to show that the custom was practised once upon a time by the Muria Gonds and a certain section of population in Tibet. The custom would appear to have ancient moorings in India. The Code of Manu explicitly permits forcible marriage to the warrior race, Kshtriyas. This system was also characterised as 'Rakshasa' mode of marriage.

Some historically acceptable traces of the custom in relation to India are to be found in the episode of Prithviraj's capture of Sanjukta. The event suggests that not only was the custom prevalent in India, it also had the royal sanction, having been followed by the ruling class. What is patronised by the royalty may obviously be taken as an accepted procedure by the commonalty.

The forms that the custom took are as numerous as they are fascinating. Bushmen of Australia pounced on unwary girls as on a beast of prey, dragging them to jungle clearing and conferring on her the status of wifehood in the presence of the village folk. Likewise, certain tribals of Cille followed an identical pattern, taking, away the bride forcefully while groom's people negotiated terms with girl's family.

While in the beginning, the groom's party may have been facing stiff, practical resistence from the bride's people, often resulting in serious physical injury, the practice gained implied recognition and ultimately only mock resistence was offered. Shouting, brow-beating, imitative fight actions, steadily replaced the original scene.

Marriage by Elopement

Marriage by elopment was, as at present, a convenient device of young lovers to frustrate the designs of parental obstruction. After the wrath of the parents had cooled down, the couple often return to obtain their blessings. In an African community, the couple who go to live in a forest after elopment, return to their settlement only when a child is born of their union. Many a youngman of various ethnic group of different castes in India settle up with their paramours in far away villages and return to their native place after years. A rather trying ordeal has to be gone through by the eloping couples of Chittagong (East Pakistan) areas as they must successfully run away four times before they are socially recognised as husband and wife.

The bought wife

The concept of marriage by purchase has had as deeply entrenched roots as marriage by capture. The cult of slavery was perhaps the factor most responsible for its thriving. The beauty of the bought female

slave may have so turned the head of the purchaser that he may have assigned her a special position. And from them on, it was a matter of evolution. Apart from this, scarcity of female population and greed on the part of parents of the beautiful maidens appear to be plausible considerations in this regard. The price pair for acquiring a wife has varied from foodstuffs to a hundred cattle heads among the primitive aborigines of Afriet. At one time, in Mecca, a virgin cost anything from fifty to three hundred and fifty dollars worth. Among Muslims the custom of paying a consideration to the father of the bride is still prevalent.

Perhaps the wife became the bought slave of the husband as evidence shows that in England the wife fell at husband's feet, kissing them, in the same fashion as any Hindu wife required to do not so long ago. Some form of this Hindu custom was followed in Russia and France too. In the latter country, an ingenuous alternative was devised which obliged the wife to bow down before the husband for retrieving the wedding ring that was deliberately thrown at or near his feet.

The system of hire purchase may seem to us as the offshoot of contemporary economic activity ; yet it was extensively made use of by the ancient peoples in the context of marriage by purchase. Youngmen were encouraged to make payment to the girl's parents by instalments. As soon as more than half of the total payment had been made, the boy was permitted to associate with the girl and even allowed to consummate marriage. In certain cases the boy was allowed to work as a labourer for a stipulated period on the farm property of his future in laws so that he could pay his way out to marrying the damsel of his fancy. This custom had been in common vogue in certain parts of Assam, having been assoduously followed by some tribal clans. The would-be groom made a gift of choice liquor to the parents of the girl and mooted the suggestion of marrying the daughter. If the proposition was acceptable, the boy was engaged as a farm hand for three seasons, but was free to claim the girl after one season ; nonetheless he was obliged to work out for the full contracted period.

The institution of marriage has been no exception to the process of evolution towards refinement and excellence. The courtship, the marriage in a Registry Office, the simple form of Church marriage, the elaborate rituals of Hindu and Oriental marriages, are all the products of genius of man's quest for the best. Many a person would perhaps be willing to accept the mode of marriage by capture, were it to guarantee peace and conjugal harmony. One can, at best sing reminiscently with Alexander Pope (with apology) that—

> "For forms of marriage let fools contest,
> Whatever is adjusted best is best."

SANKAR SEN GUPTA

SOCIO-CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS OF THE PEOPLE OF INDIA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO WOMEN

(Continued from previous issue)

Society

Before we discuss the structure of Indian women we will also say a few words about human society. It is Hegel who analysed progress into three stages which he called Thesis, Antithesis, and Synthesis. Applying this idea to educational theory, A. N. Whitehead adopted the terms, Stage of Romance, Stage of Precision, and Stage of Generalization. Jules Henry has stressed the need of reviewing the traditional concepts. Outstanding among the concepts, is the concept of "culture", which he defines as "the individual's or group's acquired response 'systems'. The definition of culture in terms of acquired characteristics, leads us back to Boas's original conception of changes in mental function under the influence of domestication. It is the domestication of *Homo sapiens* that brings it about, that man has an enormous number of response system that are not genetically determined".[71] How and why man and the anthropoid are branched off, and when, are among the mysteries of nature. It is man who has been engaged in describing himself and his activities, ever since he achieved cognition and the ability to communicate. Broadly speaking, man has passed from the food gathering to the food-producing stage. When he was dependent solely upon direct appropriation of the gifts of nature his numbers must have been very small indeed. Roughly, man has passed through the food-gathering, hunting, fishing, and nomadic existence—moving with the seasons to pasture his cattle and sheep—to the agricultural form of economy.[72]

The invention of agriculture by the womenfolk was the most momentous event in the life of early man. With oxen to plough the land, with pottery for storing harvested grain, with the

71. **Kurulkar, G. M. op. cit.**
72. **Majumdar, H. T. op. cit.**

wheel to accelerate transportation and to make less arduous, collective man had to settle down in a given place if he was to reap the full rewards of his agricultural pursuits. From this time onward the conception of life of the ancient man changed to agriculture from hunting and cattle grazing. Thus, arose the first continuous settled community, the agricultural village, lower and higher. Then owing to industrial development and scientific progress cities and towns began to appear one after another. Wealtheir and employment seekers came and settled to the towns and cities who have formed their own society—sophisticated society. The people who live in the agricultural villages of India are unsophisticated people and majority in number. These people have their own way of living. They are rich with oral traditional literature and culture and may be viewed from the following three terms: (i) structurally (ii) functionally and (iii) dynamically, i.e. in in terms of process.[73]

Structurally, society is the cultural framework of the total social heritage of folkways, mores and institutions, of habitism, sentiments and ideals. In short, all the non-material elements of culture are potent in this structure. *Functionally,* society is a complex of group. It has a receiprocal relationship that interacts upon one another within the cultural context and enables human organism to carry on their life-activities helping each person to fulfill his special wishes and accomplishes his special interests in association with his fellow-being. *Dynamically,* society is the process of stimulus-response relationships culminating in interaction, communication and consensus.[74]

Political upheavals caused by frequent aggression on the country hampered scientific progress in India. Impacts with Muslims, Dutch, Portuguse, French and English, became urgent, and helped to demolish many ancient ideas and thoughts even in the daily necessary things like medicine. Alan Greggy makes the following statement: "The totality, that is a human being, has been divided for study into parts and systems. One cannot deny the method but one is obliged to remain satisfied with its results alone. What brings and keeps our several organs and numerous functions in harmony and federation? And what has medicine to say of the fecile seperation of "mind" from "body"? What makes an individual, what the word implies—not divided? The need for more knowledge here is an excruciating

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73. Ibid.
74. Ibid.

obviousness. But more than mere need there is fore-shadowing of changes to come."[75]

We owe to all that is wonderful in the culture. Culture is created by man. Through this we attain unity. Unity of mankind are to be earned by our own efforts for which we want to know the past and the present and by these we can suppose future. In order to know the past there is no better tool to depend upon than folklore or oral traditional materials. Because we know that before there was any written literature there already existed, among many ancient nations, a vast and complex form or oral traditional literature.[76] This traditional literature in an ancient land like India has complexity and diversity. It is also a living force. Its origin, we can only surmise, goes back to the beginning of India's unrecorded history when the need arose to communicate instruction to the young and to preserve it for subsequent generations.

Since we have no records for how pre-historic man lived and behaved, and no prospects of obtaining any, we cannot hope to verify hypothesis which depend on unsound evidences. We can occasionally show that explanations founded on assumptions about prehistory and prehistoric men are improbable. More than this, 'man is the culture making animal' (Ruth Benedict). His centuries old civilization is at the mercy of any accident of time or space. Man always evolves elaborate traditional ways of doing things. No people have any truly empirical ethics; they uphold what they find themselves practicing. "No human being or group of human beings can ever freshly see the world in which they move. Every human is born into a world defined by already existing cultural patterns. Just as individual who has lost his memory is no longer 'normal' so the idea that any point in its history a society can become completely emancipated from its past culture is inconceivable" (ibid).

We know that man shared in common with other animals in the capacity to vocalize, to emit sounds. In course of time, the redimentary grunts and groans—a form of erotive language—gave away to referential language. For many many centuries, this referential language was spoken, not written; even so it gave man a tool possessed neither by birds nor by beasts. Now he could pass on the accumulated wisdom of the ages by word of mouth. Later when pictographs,

75. Kurulkar, G. M. op. cit.

76. Long, James (Rev. Father) 500 Question on the subjects requiring investigation of the people of India, Indian Publications, 1966.

ideographs, and alphabetic writings were invented, man began to pass from the haze of prehistory into the clear light of his superorganic power, began to increase by leaps and bounds by means of diffusion as well as by means of new invention.

PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH

Language :

Language cannot grow overnight. It has its own laws of growth. It forms one of the main elements in people's cultural life. Aryan language began to spread all over the country as a matter of course. References to languages other than Aryan dialects are exactly rare in Sanskrit and other Aryan literature. The languages are usually determined in terms of the placements in classification of language families, branches or groups and are decided on the basis of grammatical characterestics of specific language. It is true that a number of Indian languages and its Persian usages show some resemblences to European languages which gave rise to the name "Indo-Eupopean" for the whole group of language.[77] It is believed that in the distant past India and Iran were invaded by tribes from some other parts of the world. The tribes that spoke Indo-European languages conquered those countries. The conquerors declared themselves "higher" race than whom they had enslaved ; they gave themselves the name "Arya". People who speak in their mother tongue are proud of their own languages and resent any other language being forced on them. Language, on the development of society it emerges, lives and dies as peoples develop, it has no casual relation with the races.[78]

The language of India developed along with the people of India. There is no single or one language in India which can represent the country as a whole as the only Indian language. It is a multi-lingual country which is representated by different language families and dialect speakers. Sir Grierson, who form 1880's upto 1941, when he died, carried on investigations into Indian languages.[79] He drew scientific study of the linguistic map of the country and maintains that India has 179 languages and 544 dialects.[80] But this number has to be taken with a good deal of reservation. Of these languages, 116 are

77. Nigam, R. C. "Languages of India" Lecture given at the School of Humanistic and Cultural Studies, Ramkrishna Mission Institute of Culture on 12. 1. 1968. Also published in *Bul. of RMIC*, Vol. XIX, no. 3, March, 1968.

78. Chatterjee, S. K. and Katre, S. M. "Languages" in the Gazetter of India : Vol. 1. Country and People, Publication Dvn. Delhi, 1965.

79. ibid.

80. ibid.

small tribal speeches of the Tibeto-Chinese family and they are found only on the northern and north-eastern fringes of India. These languages are current among less than one per cent of entire population of the country.[81] Nearly two dozen more are, likewise, insignificant speeches of other language groups; or they are languages not truly belonging to India.[82]

The women of India of all language families and dialects have their own women's dialects, own chit-chat, own abuse and love-words and these represent them faithfully. This can be illustrated taking the help of Sukumar Sen[83] from the standard colloquial of West Bengal. He says that "As expected women's dialect in Bengali is archaic both in pronunciation and vocabulary. There are a great many words spoken generally by women, which occur in mediaeval Bengali works —especially in the Vaishnava lyrics—but not in modern Bengali as spoken by men.

Pejoration and vulgarity are also dominant characteristics of the language of the Bengali women." Perhaps it is also true for the womenfolk of other language groups and dialects. The following are examples of women's dialect in Bengali :

They call such act as *thona*[84] that means a blow on the cheek with finger. *Eyo*[85] means women with her husband living; *poyati*[86] means a woman big with child, *chhenal, dhemni*[87] etc. means a coquette, a characterless woman; *dhumni, dhumri*[88] means a grown up girl, a fat woman; *dajjal*[89] means a vixen; *paraberani*[90] means a constant visitor of neighbours; *paradhalani*[91] means one who plays the coquette among her neighbours: *paramajani*[92] means one who charms her neighbour, *galarkhaki*[93] means

81. Nigam, R. C. op. cit.

82. Chatterjee, S. K. and Katrte, op. cit.

83. Sen, Sukumar "Women's Dialect in Bengali" (Reprint from the Journal of Department of Letters), Calcutta University, 1928.

84. থেনা।

85. এয়ো।

86. পোয়াতী।

87. ছেনাল, ঢেমনী।

88. ধুমনী, ধুমড়ী।

89. দজ্জাল।

90. পাড়াবেড়ানী।

91. পাড়াচলানী।

92. পাড়ামজানী।

93. গাড়রগল্পকী।

one who has runined her body ; *bhatarkhaki*[94] means one who has lost her husband ; *pet felani*[95] means procuress of abortion ; *gharjalani*[96] means she who harms her own people ; *jhantapeta*[97] means beaten with a broom ; *kancha poyati*[98] is one who has recently given birth to a child ; *dhaladhali*[99] suggests close and intimate companionship (prejorative) ; *biyarphul*[100] means to have time of marriage arrived ; *Pacca chule sindur para* means may you paint vermilion on your forehead even when your hairs are grey, *dhaneputre laxmi love hok,* may you prosper in wealth and children and *hater noya akshay hok*[101] means may your iron bracelets were not out from your wrist. All these are the dialects that are used by folkwomen of Bengal in different times. These suggest their position vividly. We will see later how we can draw the character, status and position of womenfolk with the aid of such folk words and other genre of folklore. A great many sayings, songs, proverbs etc. used by women in those days are still current among the womenfolk in India today. Therefore by studying them we can also glean the position of ancient India. It is said that "It is quite possible that some of these popular maxims may be traced as far back as the early or the middle Indo-Aryan period."[102] With these few words about the Bengalee women's dialect, we will treat the language of India with more details in the following pages.

It is Robert Caldwell who established the seperate existence of a Dravidian speech-family in 1856 as opposed to the Aryan family in the north.[103] Some scholars, about that time, separated the Munda Language family. In this way, the hundreds of languages and dialects (which were to be found in India and Burma) were brought under one or the other of the following Four Great Speech-families :

(i) the Aryan, or Indo-European ;
(ii) the Dravidian ;

94. ভাতারখাকী।
95. পেট ফেলানী।
96. ঘর জ্বালানী।
97. ঝাঁটা পেটা।
98. কাঁচা পোয়াতী।
99 ঢলাঢলি।
100. বিয়ার ফুল ;
101. (১) পাকা চুলে সিন্দুর পরো, (২) হাতের নোয়া অক্ষয় হোক and (৩) ধনে পুত্রে লক্ষীলাভ হোক (These three expressions imply may your husband live till you get old and die—Quoted from Sukumar Sen's above book).
102. Sen, Sukumar op. cit.
103 Caldwell, R. *A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian or South Indian Family of Languages :* Revised and edited by Rev. G. L. Wyatt. & T. Ramakrishna Pillai, Madras, 1961.

(iii) the Munda or Kol as a member of the Austro-Asiatic branch of the Austric family of language and

(iv) the Sino-Tibetan.

These are composed of diverse racial elements and these language families are represented by four broad language and culture groups. They have had the history of living together for atleast 3000 years,[104] if not more. The plurality of language appear to have played no distrubing role during the course of early and medieval periods of Indian history through which the pan-Indian character of Indian civilization sustained itself.[105]

It is to be noted in this connection that among the four language groups, the Aryan speech-family was last to come—it was preceded by the Dravidian, Sino-Tibetan and Austric. In the evolution of the Indian people and of Indian culture, there has been, as said before, intermixture of races, languages and the various cultural *milieus*. Although the Austric and Sino-Tibetan languages are now confined to small populations, they have had their share in developing or modifying the other languages.

It is not known how and when these language families moved to India. Before their advent, there was the language of Negroid peoples, who pioneered into India from Africa along the Asian coastline, probably before the 6th millennium B.C.[106] But on the mainland of India nothing has remained of their language, the original Negroid peoples having been killed or absorved by subsequent immigrants. Thus, in the languages of the three main families spoken today—Aryan, Dravidan, and Austric,—there has been much mutual borrowing. These contacts have introduced the normal process of inter-influencing of linguistic traits.

Of the four, the Austric language speakers occupy a vast area spreading from Central India through Assam, Burma, Malay and Indonesian Islands right up to the eastern and southern extremities of the pacific including Hawaii Islands and New Zealand. This family further subdivided into Austronesian and Austro-Asiatic. In India, Austro-Asiatic subfamily is represented by the speakers belonging to Munda branch, Mon-Khemer branch including Khasis and Nicobarese. They Speak in Santals, Mundari, Ho, Bhumij, Korku, Kharia, Savara, etc. and is representated by a population of little more than a million according to 1961 census.

Next, Tibeto-Chinese family of language. It's area stretches

104. Nigam, R. C. op. cit.
105. Chatterjee, S. K. and Kartre, op. cit.
106. Sen, Sukumar *History and Pre-history of Sanskrit*, Mysore, 1957.

right from Baltistan in the west to the north-eastern frontiers of the country and further reaching up to the southernmost portions of Assam. The total population in this language family is about 3.2 million where there are as many as 226 names of mother tongues which have been enumerated in 1961.

On scrutiny, it has tentatively been considered that about 98 languages are in existence in India and they are mostly oral which has no script or are available in written form.[107] The most famous speakers are Meithei-Manipuri, Boro, Garo, Tripuri, Lushai, Miri, Abor etc. This has again two subfamalies (i) Siamese-Chinese and (ii) Tibeto-Bhutan. Tibeto-Bhutan subfamily is further divided into (a) Tibeto-Himalayan and (b) Assam-Burmese branch. The speakers of the Tibeto-Chinese family as a whole, are : Bhotia Lahuli, Bhutani, Balti, Boro, Mech, Garo, Koch, Rabha, Mikir, Naga, Manipuri, Miri, Abor, Dafla, Aka, Mishmi, Nokte etc. Many of these languages and dialects have influenced surrounding Indo-Aryan languages like Assamese, Bengali, Nepali, Hindi, or Punjabi.[108]

The Dravidian language family has a total speakers of more than 107 million. This family embraces four major regional language areas of the South India i.e. Telugu, Tamil, Kannada and Malayalam. They together account for 95.58 per cent of the total number of Dravidian speakers in the country and of the four great Dravidian languages, Tamil appears to have preserved its Dravidian character best.[109]

The Indo-European language family embraces by far the largest number of human beings on the earth. In India, this great family is represented by its sub-families. According to 1961 census approximately 322 million speakers are accounted in this language family which is about 73.3 per cent of the entire population of India. Out of the 14 major languages approved by the Constitution of the Republic of India, 10 including Sanskrit come within the orbit of the Indo-Aryan subfamily. This subfamily is again divided into 3 branches, (i) Iranian (ii) Dardin and (iii) Aryan. The first is representated by Persian, Pashto, Balochi and are considered of foreign origin ; the next is represented by Kafir, Dard, and Khowar which has the strength of about 2 million speakers, and the third is represented by the largest number of languages, such as (i) North-western group including Lahnda or Western Punjabi dialects and Sindhi, (ii) Southern-group including Marathi and Konkani ; (iii) Eastern-group including, Assamese,

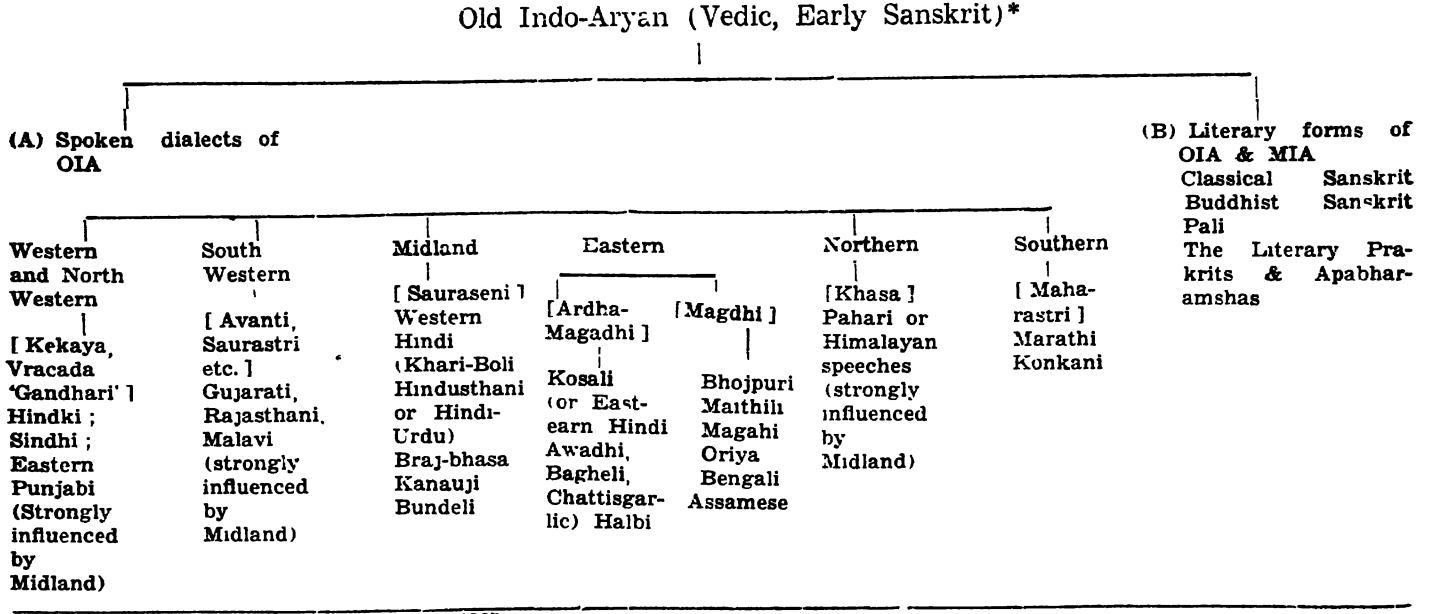
107. Linguistic Survey Report by the office of the Registrar General of India, New Delhi.

108. ibid.

109. Nigam R. C. op. cit.

TABLE IV-A

Genetic relationship of Indo-Aryan Languages



*Source : The Gazeeteer of India, 1965.

The next table will speak of the State-wise major speakers of language in contemporary India :

TABLE

State-wise major speakers

States	Assamese	Bengali	Gujarati	Hindi	Kannada	Kashmiri
Andhra Pradesh	122	3,346	20,467	136,069	381,860	104
Assam	6,784,271	2,061,533	712	511,818	206	41
Bihar	224	1,164,041	20,068	20,567,755	674	186
Gujarat	37	3,393	18,671,562	192,279	5,192	122
J. & K. State	5	400	79	22,323	14	1,896,149
Kerala	14	670	6,927	7,327	62,068	17
M. P.	595	52,813	127,613	21,686,140	4,454	552
Madras	70	2,498	17,929	38,974	853,211	89
Maharastra	272	29,114	1,067,509	1,088,927	629,583	658
Mysore	121	2,583	27,944	81,500	15,361,051	23
Orissa	—	125,687	9,436	174,011	584	2
Panjab	1,196	4,811	1,852	11,297,838	604	8,124
Rajasthan	71	8,807	41,833	650,554	371	317
U. P.	303	104,528	12,831	62,442,721	1,527	1,316
W. B.	8,279	29,408,246	25,707	1,894,039	683	99

Source : The Gazetteer of India. 1965, Appendix VI.

There are recognisable geographical bands where there are more than 1000 ratio, a curious pattern, except for eastern Madhya Pradesh and Bihar largely on It will be seen sex ratio is appreciably lower in north of latitude 22° than south of it.

IV-B

of languages of India, 1961

Malayalam	Marathi	Oriya	Punjabi	Sanskrit	Tamil	Telugu	Urdu
23,348	276,968	189,497	10,125	25	434,713	30,932,257	2,553,753
2,204	5,452	145,488	8,938	—	4,501	19,786	11,263
7,559	5,074	302,951	70,988	129	16,177	37,214	4,149,245
7,709	191,200	379	14,627	99	13,264	10,542	594,538
156	226	26	109,174	3	349	172	12,445
16,065,468	18,570	59	1,147	7	527,613	44,838	9,160
19,816	860,318	304,297	103,291	384	26,173	55,824	740,098
399,206	51,431	399	3,473	117	28,011,099	3,363,579	615,503
90,459	30,233,034	3,383	101,317	82	159,396	623,803	2,725,689
290,586	1,056,498	252	5,336	125	854,227	2,044,249	2,034,481
4,832	1,084	14,434,887	6,966	—	6,918	393,453	212,891
6,387	4,851	532	8,336,787	124	6,789	2,410	255,660
2,213	9,183	1,408	401,115	31	3,443	1,181	509,654
7,715	14,466	1,355	345,181	1,330	12,399	4,530	7,891,710
8,320	13,239	212,890	12,398	14	32,663	80,930	832,847

females per 1,000 males. If districts and States are arranged according to sex account of their tribal populations, will seem to emerge on either side of latitude 22° This is reflected also in the sex ratio of urban areas in the north and south.

Bengali, Oriya, and Bihari language speeches of Maithili, Magahi, and Bhojpuri, and (iv) Central group including the broad Hindi language areas of Awadhi and Chhatisgarhi, Hindi area of Delhi and Western Uttar Pradesh including Urdu, Khari Boli, Hindusthani, Bangru, Brah, Bhakha, Kanuji, Bundeli, Punjabi, Dogri, Gujarati and Rajasthani speeches like Marwari, Nepali, Garhwali, Kumaun, Chameli, Mandeali, Kului, Mahasu and Sirmaui and so on are also grouped with this language family.

The Old Indo-Aryan language family may be summarised in the form of a table showing the genetic relationship of Indo-Aryan languages. (See Table IV-A and IV-B).

The Dravidian languages form a family by themselves and belong to the class of speeches known as "Agglutinative" i.e. the word is made up of a root which comes at the head or beginning, and the root is followed by one or more terminations. Structurally, Dravidian languaages agree with other language groups outside India—the Ural-Altaic (Turkish, Mongal, Manchu, Finn, Eath, Lapp, Hungarian) and the North-East Asian languages (like Japanese, Korean, Ainu, Khamchadal and Yukaghir"[110] Recent investigations in culture-areas reveal that the area occupied by distinct languages are not coterminus with the culture areas. And the cultural relationship may be based not merely on linguistic affinities but other things, such as religion etc., are equally important. Thus we are placing under a note on religion. Religion in India is inseperable with the life of Indian men and women. It is especially important for the womenfolk of the country. The life of Indian women is inconceivable without religion. Used with full understanding it can become one of her life's biggest supports.

Religion :

Religion plays an important part in the life of the Indians. That India is a land of tolerance is not only proved by the co-existence of various religious sects or groups but also from the fact that even after the partition of the country in 1947 on the basis of religion—Hinduism and Islam—there are over 50 million Muslims in India.

Needless to remember that men and women of different groups are linked by communications and contacts and undergoing changes. From this process modern men and women have become a mixture of numerous ancient and contemporary types. This explains, to a considerable extent, why men and women of different races are found in one biological whole. Thus men and women of all the races are

110. Chatterjee S. K. and Katre, S. M. op. cit.

dependent to each other. No section can be survived by ignoring the other.

It is well known that in the formation of the man and woman and their bodies, there are certain glands, the serum of which are circulated through vain. This process has great role in the shaping to human body, their minds and nature. In this way, a woman gets sweet voice, becomes affectionate to human being, nature and other things. Along with her body structure, she develops finer tastes, efficacious character and certain womanish interests, which are exclusively her own. She, by virtue of nature's gift, is intended to be soft, tender-hearted, sympathetic to mother and children. These things influence her to a great extent unconsciously. So she becomes emotional. She is the embodiment of sacrifice and suffering. As a mother, she is most delightful. Taking blessings and inspiration from her, whatever works a man undertakes, succeeds. Thus, a man is delighted being able to get her touch, her good wishes. From her he acquires ability to work and becomes active with her power is the conception of India.

Women are superior to men in beauty and loveliness. Physically men are stronger and powerful than women.[111] Women are best in tending to bring prosperity, they are the combination of Lakshmi and Saraswati, Goddesses of Wealth and Learning when men are superior in intelligence, they symbolize Brahma, Lord of the Lords. Every woman has great feelings. She is kind hearted so she has acquired the position of a wife, which according to the Hindu idea means *sahadharmini* or *ardhangini* or half of the body. It is like the negative and positive wire, the conjunction of the two brings the current of the light. The man and woman both together create human society through their conjugal relations. When one is mild, the other is hard ; one manages the other in the family and society life. Thus man and woman together lead a happy family which is the source for the prosperity of a nation. So Indian philosophers preferred to call man and woman as *purusa* and *prakriti* respectively.

Nevertheless there is bifurcation. Whilst both are fundamentally one, it is also equally true that in the body form there are a vital differences between the two. Hence the vocation of the two must also be different. The duty of motherhood, which women will always undertake, requires such qualities that man need not posses. She is passive, he is active. Such is the mistress of the house and without her care the race must become extinct. We have many abuses in our midst, moral,

111. Tagore, Rabindranath, *Rabindra Rachanabali*, part 13. Published by the Govt. of West Bengal, Calcutta 1368-1373 B.S.

social, economic and political.[112] They require patient study, projected research and sober judgment.

In our present-day society, we find a constructively developing materialist concept, that is why, there is endeavour after endeavour to know each other from minute details. When we examine the position and stutus of women of India from the point of view of living religions survived, we find that each and every religion has its fundamental approach to their women. And by their nature and teachings we can study the character of the womenfolk. Some have greater aptitude than other for expressing themselves in religious matters when others seem to be materialistic. They all have created problems peculiar to their own characters and set-ups. So far as Hinduism is concerned which is the chief religion of India, it is full with receptivity and all comprehensiveness.

The following table contains speakers of major religions in India according to 1961 census. It shows that India has no difficulty in bringinging diverse faiths within its widening fold.

TABLE V

State-wise Population of major religions, 1961

States/Country	Buddhists	Christians	Hindus	Jains	Muslims	Sikhs
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
India	3,256,036	10,728,086	366,526,866	2,027,281	46,940,799	7,845,915
A. P.	6,753	1,428,729	31,813,944	9,012	2,715,201	8,563
Assam	36,513	764,553	7,884,921	9,468	2,765,509	9,686
Bihar	2,885	502,195	39,345,517	17,598	5,785,631	44,413
Gujarat	3,185	91,028	18,356,065	409,754	1,745,103	9,646
J & K.	48,360	2,848	1,013,193	1,427	2,432,067	63,069
Kerala	228	3,587,365	10,282,568	2,967	3,027,639	822
M. P.	113,365	188,314	30,425,798	247,927	1,317,617	65,715
Madras	777	1,762,954	30,927,115	28,350	1,560,414	2,567
Maharastra	2,789,501	560,594	32,530,901	485,672	30,34,332	57,617
Mysore	9,770	487,587	20,582,853	174,366	2,328,376	3,287
Orissa	454	201,017	17,123,194	2,294	265,319	5,030
Punjab	14,857	149,834	12,930,045	48,754	393,314	6,769,129
Rajasthan	759	22,864	18,132,690	409,417	1,314,613	274,198
U. P.	12,893	101,641	62,437,316	122,108	10,788,089	283,737
W. B.	112,253	204,530	27,523,358	26,940	6,985,287	34,184

Source : Gazetter of India, 1965.

It is the idea of some philosophers that men, women and religions

112. Gandhi, M. K. *Women and Social injustice*, Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, 1942.

have mutual need for each other. Their range and varieties are remarkable in India and they have manifested themselves in great many forms. They contain not only much that is crude, unintelligible, and rational, but also much that is noble, idealistic, inspiring, and enduring. The apparant chaos or confusion of rites, rituals, beliefs, practices, superstitions, etc. do not represent the country or the nation as a whole or even the majority of religion. It is both personal and impersonal, conservation and destruction, belief and disbelief, as well as it has the universal element of faith. Faith creats facts. Facts enrich religion. In India, religion is meant no formal dogma embodied in an institution but the realization and appropriation of God. This is to be achieved through *sadhana*, devotion and practice.

Religion can be explained as a revelation ; it is an experience, and demands nothing less than the ultimate unification of life on which order it has its own supreme contact. It treats death as a chapter of life in itself. That is why, *dharma*, as a concept in India, is the essence of religion. Whatever upholds life or its value is religion.[113] The word *dharma*[114] has perhaps a more clear concept than the term religion. It is, according to Indian thought, that which accomplished the wellbeing of mankind here as well as hereafter. It leads to the

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113. Religion and 'dharma' are almost interchangeable expressions. Dharma is nothing but the basic principles of right conduct. The word 'dharma' is derived from the root 'dhr', to hold, means that which sustains a thing and maintains it in being. Every form of lives every group of men has its 'dharma' which is the law of its being. Indian masters, therefore, have divided syllabi of studies into four major divisions (1) *Dharma*—Law and Equality ; (2) *Artha*—Politico-Economic Sciences ; (3) *Karma*—Enjoyment of life ; and (4) *Moksha*—Renouncing desire to find emancipation. These elements were shared under different nomenclatures by the orthodox as well as the heterodox teachers of India.

114. The term 'dharma' as described by Monier Williams is "that which is firmly established, steadfast, decrees....ordinance, laws, virtue, morality, and religion" (Sanskrit English Dictionary, Oxford). Radhakrishnan says "Dharma gives coherence and direction to different activities of life. It is the complete rule of life, the harmony of the whole man who finds a right and just law of his living. Each man and group, each activity and sour, mind, life, and body has its *dharma*" (Eastern Religion and Western Thought, London). Three different pathways are open to us for attaining this aim, namely, *'jnana'* or wisdom, *'bhakti'* or devotion and *'karma'* or service. The theory of 'karma' is closely linked with the theory of 'punar janma' or re-birth. These are not exclusive but emphasize the dominent aspect only. Since dharma is trans individual, no social contact is necessary, harmony is attained when everyone follows his own *dharma*. According to Aristotle man "may not be good citizen by nature", but according to Hindu tradition, man's essence being a part of the universal spirit, he can dissolve the conflict by remembering his own *dharma* and achieve the identity of a good man and a good citizen. The equilibrium established by *dharma* rests on the interdependence of all individuals who have to realise their rights and responsibilities.

way of life which is loving towards all living beings. It covers all morality, art, science and philosophy but transcends them all. It is action which includes contemplation and meditation that generate action. The bond that links the religious mind throughout the length and breadth of the land is *sakti,* which finds its spontaneous expression in *bhajan* or *kirtan* or religious love lyrics.

Among all the great religions of the world there is none more catholic, more assimilative than the mass of beliefs which go to make up what is popularly known as Hinduism. In its earlier stages Hinduism was known as Brahmanism, which in course of many centuries, has gone through changes and reformations. To what was probably its original form nature worship in a large degree introduced by the Aryan missionaries has been added an enormous amount of demonolatry, fetishism and kindred forms of primitive religion, much of which has been adopted from different races. The Aryan people were nature worshipper. But all the elements of nature worship which exist in India today are not the contribution of these people alone. The different races which inhabited the land before the advent of the Aryans also adorned the different phenomena of the nature in some way or other.[115] The subsequent Hindu religion did not follow the entirety of the Vedic tradition which was carried by the Aryans, was transformed to Neo-Hinduism. Therefore, the character of the nature worship in India possesses diverse elements which are at time irreconcilable. Sometime the Vedic nature cult has merged into the alien cultures though instances of independent borrowing are there.[116]

Nature-worship in one form or another is the first entirely clear emergence of a religion which adores. In nature-worship men began with what they saw first and knew best. Heaven, Earth, Rain, Thunder, Water, Sea, Fire, Sun and Moon furnishes humanity's first pantheon.[117] The Rain-god has always been sure of worshippers. Because rain fertilises the land. Cloud-god, Thunder-god, Wind-god come up together, fill the zenith with their tumult and disappear. But the Sun dies not, disappears not, and it has all that contains firmament.[118] These forces of the upper air thus tend to become the

115. Atkins, Gaius Glenn and Charls Samuel Braden *Procession of the Gods*, Harper & Brothers, New York, 3rd rev. edn. 1948.

116. Ayer, C. P. Ramswami *Fundamenatls of Hindu Faith and Culture*, Madras, 1959.

117. Atkins, Gaius Glenn et al, op. cit.

118. The sun-god changed its name from place to place but never essentially changed its nature. The comrades of the sun in the sky becomes the comrades of sun-god in temples and shrines. The belief is universal that ruling families have descended from the sun.

ministers of a vaster, more inclusive divinity; the Sky-god absorbs them all.

Earth-worship is as old as sky. While Father Sky was a longway off, Mother Earth was left friendly and near. Earth-worship shades of into border regions which tax the learning and interpretative ingenuity of specialists.[119] Then there is tree-worship, it is a kind of primitve worship. There has been a marvelous growth of mythology,'[20] folklore and poetry on tree-worship. Tree worship has been intimately associated with serpent-worship. All these we have seen in our earlier works like that of the "Rain in Indian Life and Lore," 1963, and the "Tree Symbol Worship in India", 1966 and in other's works and dissertations. It should not be out of place to mention that the popular elements are not arbitrary or isolated facts but are based on deep-rooted historic basis. They hint forgotten age when life was so different from ours.

We quote Asutosh Bhattacharya in this connection who while discussing the basis of Bengali folk culture said "The different races of humanity which entered India in pre-historic times by the North-East of this sub-continent must have had passed through Bengal at one time. It can however be easily imagined that they not only passed through this country, but also lived in it until they were driven out of their settlements subsequently by more powerful invading races because Bengal has got her natural attraction. In medieval India there was a saying which meant that there was a way in, but no way out of Bengal. This was also true in pre-historic times.... It only naturally follows that each race left its own mark not only physical but also cultural which collectively formed the basis of the future higher culture. This is the reason why so many variants, sometimes antagonistic to one another, occur in the elements of subsequent cultural life of Bengal. It will be seen that sun-god is worshipped here in not only half a dozen names and characters, but also in the same number of different methods, ...Therefore it will be seen that the culture of the people at large of a country which is recognised as civilised verges on primitivism. The average man is a primitive man notwithstanding

119. Atkins, Gaius Glenn and Charles Samuel Braden op. cit.

120. Myth is not symbolic, it is a direct expression of the subject matter, a narrative resurrection of a primeaval reality told in satisfaction of deep religious wants, moral carvings, social submissions, assertions, even practical requirements said by Malinowsky in his book entitled "Myth in Primitive Psychology", London, 1926. Myth is then a form of thought rather than intution, it is somewhat akin to meaningful dream experience. A mythical phenomena means materialization of some event or metamorphosis of some concrete material form as it is called in the Vedic mythology.

his vanity of civilization. ... It will be seen from the study of folk-culture how the higher Hindu gods representing abstract qualities of different aspects of spiritual life have been converted to answer the day-to-day practical needs of Bengalee rural folk. The supreme god in primitive religion is no abstract idea, but a physical being who renders the greatest practical service to humanity. This is illustrated by Siva, the Supreme God of the Bengalee peasants. Though the nomenclature of the God has been borrowed from higher Hinduism, it has little or no bearing upon the ideals of any higher religious doctrine.

Notwithstanding the wide prevalence of caste system, imported through higher Hindusm, the folk religion of Bengal has contributed a great deal in maintaining her social integrity. People irrespective of caste and creed assemble in the same congregation to offer worship to the deities representing serpent, tiger, small pox, cholera etc."[121]

The growth and development of Hinduism is found in the sacred books. The Vedas, which consist of over a thousand hymns, addressed to many nature Gods. The next stage in the development of Hinduism is representated by the Brahmanas, which are commentaries on the Vedas and in them nature worship is gradually transformed into a complex and theistic vision of the universe.[122] The third stage revealed in the Upanishads, which were written down in books but were still reserved for an inner circles of the upper castes. Though Hinduism has developed through many changes since the creation of the Rigveda, some of its basic ideas and beliefs have remained constant throughout the centuries in all the religious sects and groups. As for example, the Vaishnavas of the south and north, and Saktas, Saivas etc. sects of the great Hindu religion believe in one Supreme God of love and grace. They also believe in the individuality of every soul, believe in the salvation through *bhakti* and reverence to the Guru. All these, it is no wonder, have great influence in the formation of characters of Hindu men and women.

One finds an appropriate formula for everything. Every kind of disease, bad dreams, evil eye, to win one's love, to strengthen any failing power for children and the power to beget them as well as for compelling and stopping of rain, the lucky face of the dire, good work or sin, there are code of conduct. Here there are some wholly immoral association of every possible need and deed with some supernatural power. They are outstanding characteristic of Hindu religion. It invests every aspect of Hindu life and living. There are

121. Bhattacharya, Asutosh, "The Basis of Bengali Folk Culture", *Folklore* Calcutta, January-February, 1960.

122. Atkins, Gaius Glenn and Charles Samuel Braden op. cit.

Hindu beliefs that there are gods in everything. The influence of outstanding teachers and leaders has often redirected the currents of leaders. Therefore, we see the appearance of Jainism.

Ahimsa, 'no-injury' or 'reverence of life' is the key word of Jainism. The fundamental assumptions are *nirvan* and Right Conviction, Right Knowledge and Right Conduct. Naturally the men and women of this faith are more religious minded who are wealthy too as well. They come mainly from the business community and have been treated here.

Everybody knows that history of India is a history of congruity and cohesion from Vedic age to Buddhist period. Buddhist period is now known as an ancient period of India. India's history has gradually been much complicated than what it was in the earlier periods. The real history of India can be had from the social and religious study.

Buddhist period is the golden age of Indian history. It is placed in between the Vedic period and Brahmanic period. In the ancient period there were frequent clashes with the people and each group was jealous to the other. In the pre-historic period proto-Australoid people spread their culture far and wide through Indian and Pacific Oceans. In those days war happened in close succession for everything. They also were engaged in interstate disputes. The Bhil women, who belong to the aboriginal group of people and claims themselves as one of the early settlers of India, were found helping their husbands in facing enemies. They also participated in wars armed with slings which we know from T. B. Mukherjee's book "Interstate Relations in Ancient India", 1967. It is during the Buddhist period that the kind wars, battles and conflicts were channelised to one direction owing to the approach of oneness of Buddhism. The evils of war like bloodshed, treachery, arson, loot and other inhuman activities got a check from the natural reaction against war and a yearning for peace. In the Brahmanic period enemies created dissensions amongst allies. Taking some aspect of Rigvedic civilisation and Buddhist ideas the pan-Hindu civilization come into existence.[123] There

123. Mohenjodaro and Harappa were highly developed civilization in 3rd millionium B.C. During the period of Vedic civilization people lived on agriculture and cattle breading, supplemented with hunting. Later on Aryans infiltrated into the fertile soil of India and formed tribunal states. There were disputes then on such issues as cattle, water-right, women etc. Nevertheless, idea in regard to peace and amity was also found there in Rigveda. In the Brahmanic age enemies created dissensions amongst allies. In order to disunite them some Aryan joined non-Aryan against Aryans. In the Ramayana period there was bid for universal sovereignty. In the Mahabharata times the concept of sovereignty was clear. In Dharmashastra's time dynamics of expansion took place. In the age of Purana hostilites came into existence. At the time of Buddha India was divided into a

are gulf of difference between the Vedic period and Brahmanic period in rities, rituals, behaviours and practices. The idea of universal soveriegnty was felt from the craving of peace, progress and prosperity which lead some individual or group to live amicably and peacefully. But the idea of expansion and preservation of one's territory along with expansion of one's self was there.

The period between Pusymitra of the Sunga Dynasty and Harsavardhana of Kanauj—185 B.C. to A.D. 648—may be aptly called the period of Vedic renaissance. On the cultural plane Patanjali heralds Brahmanic period and Sankracharya terminated it. The Buddhist culture that had entered a defensive phase with Kaniska on the political plane and Nagarjuna and Asvaghosa on the cultural plane began to show signs of decadence with the rise of the Guptas.[124]

The Gupta period marked by religious toleration of all faiths, creeds and cults. The pro-Brahmanic kings not only encouraged Buddhism along with Sakta and Durga cults but also others with the same amount of regard they had for their own. This catholicity, noble in itself, resulted in the growth of sectarianism within Hinduism repercussions of which later proved fatal to Hindu culture. Some of the sects and cults that emerged in this period sanctioned indulgences—wine, meat and women as sacred. It had at its helm libertine bhikhus and by the transformation of Mahayana into Mantrayana and later into Vajrayana which, in the line with Tantricism, extolled sex indulgence.[125]

Buddhism is a religion of introspection, rennuciation and compassion. In no other religion of the world so much strain is laid of the duty to find peace in one's own mind which is also effective for the women belonging to Buddhism and this we will see later.

About 1000 A.D. the followers of Mohammad, using the Pass which the Aryans trod atleast 2000 years before them, invaded India and spread throughout the Peninsula. These people canvassed and caused

number of petty principalities and there was no strong government. Thus Buddha's clarion call for being united in one principal was partial successful. The Indus valley civilization discloses types of thoughts and culture which might have been the forerunner of later developments which came to be known as Hinduism at a much later age. The link between Vedism and the great epics and Puranas may be said to be slender, not only in the spheres of mythology and religion, but also in several other domains. It may be that Vedism, which was mostly priest-ridden culture was grafts later on the prevailing types of religious thought. The bond between mythico-religious consciousness and linguistic thought is that the verbal structures appears as entities endowed with mythical power.

124. Altekar, A. S. op. cit.

125. ibid.

to cover larger surface for Mohammadism in India and there are considerable number of the believers of their religion. It is the Arabs who first introduced Islam in India. The Islamic conquest, began with the conquest of Sindh by Mohammad bin Kasim in A.D. 712. The impact of Islam became serious with the installation of Muslim power by Shahabuddin Ghori in A.D. 1193. It assumed a threatening and everpowering force to Hindu culture under Allaudin Khilji in the early 14th century, when Islam began to unfold and expand in India. Its universal quality is expressed in the belief that it is an eternal religion. This religion announces that there is no God, but *Allah* and its development was within the historical period.[126] Their attitude towards the womenfolk was materialistic. It is they who popularised *purdah* system in India. More details on it will be had later.

The Hindu catholicity had divided the Hindus into various sectarian groups, none of which had the strength to unite. The growing rigidity of the caste-groups tended to accentuate exclusiveness under the spell of which the Hindus failed to evaluate the danger of Islam. In a word, Hindu reactions to the Islamic conquest were retreat, despair and defeatism. The despairing spirit of the Hindus on the one hand sought consolation in the philosophy which taught the nothingness of life, and, on the other, revealed in the erotic devotional songs on the lives of Radha and Krishna or Krishna and the Gopis. This defeatist attitude, helped to bear the cruelty of social system in hide-bound restrictions. On the other hand the Brahmanic attitude towards the lower-castes forced the latter to embrace Islam. These new converts to Islam proved to be more ferocious and more tyrannous to Hindu culture than were the Muslims themselves. Still then they have adopted certain local customs, superstitions etc. which have seperated them from their brethern of the land of origin of religion. So we have included an article on Muslim women and not on the native Christians.

After the Muslim conquest a few intrepid Zorostrain sought refuge in India who are known as Parsis. Polygamy is allowed among them as it is also permitted with the Muslims. Purity in thoughts, words, and deeds, implies the wills to do good, and to made men better fiitted to contribute happiness of human society are their motto.

In the later part of the fifteenth century Guru Nanak organised a movement which has since come to be known as Sikh movement. Like Islam, it is monotheistic and non-idolartous in its worship and somewhat akin to it in the militancy which made it for a time strong contender for the rule of all India. Sikhism has also developed out of

126. Gaer, Joseph *The Wisdom of the Living Religions*, Skeffington, London, 1958.

Hinduism with a distinct belief in Guru. It does not renounce worldly activities. A Sikh believes implicity in teachings of the Guru. Their service comprises the ringing of bells, blare instruments, chantings of hymns and waving of lights before Adi Granth. An article on Sikh women is added here which will speak of their womenfolk.

From the nineteenth century onward there appeared all over India a number of Hindu saints who tried to preach equality of all, irrespective of caste or creed. These saints, who were devout worshippers of personal God, Rama or Gauranga, had immense appeal for the masses. As these saints came from different castes, including Sudras, and at times even untouchables, distinctions of castes seemed to recede into the background for the timebeing. Again, they not only accepted the social order which recognised social injustice in terms of caste and sex, but being devout Hindus submitted themselves to persecution in the name of that social order. They were also absorbed with the goal of attaining oneness with life on earth. They did not bother about the rightness or wrongness of the social order in which they were brought up and which they were taught to accept as sacrosant. A critical reader will find more facts on Hindu women here.

The modern age of exploration and expansion took Christianity in its Roman Catholic form into India. The beginning of the nineteenth century saw a much more vigorous penetration by Protestant Christianity. This meeting of Christianity and Hinduism produced a number of new movements which while considered still to be within Hinduism, nevertheless, bear many characteristics of the imported Christain faith. Most notable of these were *Brahma Samaj* of Bengal which was founded by Raja Rammohun Roy in 1833.

All these different religious faiths and movements including the teachings of the prevailing folk religion among the vast majority of Indian masses have made the status and position of India's women complicated and varied. By the word Indian women, we mean the women of different castes, communities, sects and linguistic groups who practice different forms of religious faiths and perform such rites and rituals that are sanctioned either by their respective religious faiths or by folk religion. Then by the term'Indian women' one should not accept the women of upper class only, it also include the women of the lower classes, who helped their men in crafts like spining, weaving, making of baskets and could do out door work side by side with male members of the family in the field, factory or elsewhere.

(To be continued)

Notice

The page no. of the first forma of this issue will be 275 to 282 instead of what have been printed there.

S. S. BHATTACHARYA

THE MIZO WAREARE

It is a contribution for better understanding to the Mizo Warfare in recent times. The contributor has made field investigation and the fruits of that research is seen in the present paper. Until now the Mizo problem have been but scarcely appreciated. The contributor has given hints to some points which should be considered before taking decisions and it would also be necessary to make further observations to decide how far the point raised by the contributor stands right.

'HIT and run' is the secret of the warfare of the tribes of the Mizo Hills district, especially the Lushais—now known as the Mizos. The Mizos, some of whom have recently gone hostile by repeating their old tactics of atrocity, have consequently been successful to draw the attention of the security forces of India, possess the qualities of a war-like people as they are physically well-built, sturdy and hardworking people. The warfare of the Mizos may be termed as guerilla or skirmish in the hills and jungles where the Mizos take advantage from the local conditions and physical features for the tactics of their stategy. The land of the Mizos is characterized by rough mountain slopes and dissected by countless torrents and rivulets. The Valleys made by these streams are covered by a thick growth of monsoon jungle in which ferocious wild animals and insects are found in abundance. All these factors exert immense influence on the character of the Mizos. Incumbent by the natural surroundings, the Mizos build their houses on the top of the mountain ridges which are sometimes fortified by stockades of heavy bamboo-logs and other fancing material. Furthermore, the state of continuous insecurity and constant struggle against the odds has made the Mizos stubborn and aggressive and these have added peculiar wit to their technique and tactics of warefare.

For numerous causes, the Mizos launch war against their enemy. It is not always the dislike of any tribe or its actions that lead the Mizos to indulge in violent activities but sometimes an internal quarrel with a tribe or for the fulfilment of a selfish desire is sufficient for their assault and outrages. According to O'Malley "A private quarrel with a neighbouring clan, a scarcity of women and domestic servants,

and the consequent necessity of procuring a requisite number of captives to supply the wants of the tribes, the simple desire of plunder or of obtaining heads to grace the obsequises of some departed chieftain, were the principal causes which led to the commission of these raids."

After planning the place and time of a war, the leader of the tribes, sends his spear or a wand or a fighting *dao* (a long, broad and uncovered sword) with different indications on it from village to village to collect his men. The signs on these objects are so meanigful that they serve as indicators to the tribesmen as to what kind of war they are going to wage, what weapons they should carry with them and what punishment would be falling on them if they defy the order or make themselves absent. Lewin, T. H., a vetern on the Mizo's warfare, elaborating a detail description on the different methods adopted by the chief to collect his men mentions that "to collect his people, or impact to authenticate any order, the chief's spear, which is usually covered and ornamented is sent by a messenger from village to village. *dao,* to which a piece of red cloth is attached. Another method is by the '*phurori*', which is a species of wand made out of strips of peeled bamboo, about two inches long in this shap. If the tips of the cross pieces be broken, a demand for black-mail is indicated ; a rupee to be levied for each break. If the end of one of the cross-pieces is charred it implies urgency, and that the people are to come even by torch-light. If a capsicum be fixed on to the 'phurori', it signifies that disobedience to the order will meet with punishment as severe as the capsicum is hot. If the cross-piece is of cane, it means that disobedience will entail corporal punishment."

The tribes as soon as see the messenger of their chief with the indicators begin to assemble at the latter's court. If the message be a hostile one, i.e., the chief wants a raid to be carried on to the enemy. the people come with their arms, such as flint-licks, tower-muskets, spears, daos, bows, arrows, panjis (bamboo spikes) and the guns. The Mizos used to have the guns through their raids on the British officials and subjects.

Before starting for a raid each man is provided with his food consisting of cooked rice, to continue for several days, the people ran down their food very tightly into pices of bamboo, so that it may not be wasted on the way of their march. They carry their water in a section of bamboo. They cut the bamboo just above one joint and just below the joint a hole is made and cut the bamboo at the next joint. They plug the bamboo with a roll of leaves so that the water may not come out through the hole.

In this way, after full preparations, the Mizos set out for their

warfare or raids. The raiding party consists of a chief, his sons and the men-folk of the tribes. No women and children are included in the party. The party, very cautiously, walk during the darkness of the night and passing through the deep jungles and difficult and different terrains reach their destination before the dawn. The Mizos never advance openly. They send forward their scouts to make sure the unawareness of their enemy. If the enemy is found alert, the Mizo quickly retreat without attack. Otherwise, the Mizos surround the place of their attack and advance on the enemy. The chief always remain behind and shouts 'forward', 'forward'. The men quickly fall on their enemy and ransaking the village, killing the men, women and children, then hurriedly retreat with as much loot as possible along with the captives mostly the damsels and boys. The raid is carried out so rapidly that sometimes the chief does not get a chance to kill any of his enemies by his own hands.

After the raid, the raiding party in fear of any organised attack by the enemy walk on as fast as possible and never stops until the destination is reached. They also stop after the completion of 48 hours' journey. If any one of the captives cannot keep pace with them, he or she is killed on the way and his or her head is being carried away to the village for ornamentation.

The chief of the raiding party after reaching his village orders for a grand festival to celebrate the success of the raid. The festival starts with the killing of a captive by the chief's son to prove his bravery. In this celebration, generally, the women captives are not killed, but most of the men captives are slaughtered, and the rest are kept alive as slaves.

Another characteristic of the warfare of the Mizos' is ambush. The Mizos make the ambush, generally by the side of the road or path through which they expect their enemy. The ambush is so serious that the Mizos get their enemy, sometimes, quite unprepared, and then making a great slaughter on them and loot disappear quickly down the hills through the deep jungle ignoring all sorts of danger. Lt. Col. Shakespear giving his experience of the ambush observes that "these ambushes were always arranged below the road, where the ground fell away very sharply, and, having fired, the brave fellows hurled themselves down the hill ignoring all cuts and scratches in their anxiety to escape."

Sometimes, the Mizos put spikes on the way of their enemy. They make the spikes from the bamboo and closely fix them on the ground so that the pointed tips of the spikes remain two inches to a few feet above the ground. The Mizos drive their enemy towards these spikes

and kill every one of them as the latter cannot move forward through the pointed and poisonous spikes.

The only thing the Mizos fear mostly is an artillery atack on them. During the British rule in India, the Mizos carried out their countless attacks on the British officials and subjects, but they could not oppose strongly any of the British military expeditions that entered into their hills and punished them heavily as they always feared the heavy-hands.

With the introduction of the guns and Missionaries in the Mizo Hills district the whole strategy of the Mizos' warfare has gone under tremendous changes. This transformation from savage to modern has occurred during the past few years. The guns have added fresh strength to their power, and the Missionaries have provided them new hope and illusions to maintain it.

From the observations made above it becomes crystal clear that the Mizos, with their tacties and strategy, are not expected at all to fight out the security forces in the Mizo Hills district. Then how is that the Mizos still hold command over a large part of the Mizo Hills district against the wishes of the security forces? In searching out the matter it becomes evident that it is neither the guns nor Missionaries but Pakistanis, Communists and Chinese indulgence and sympathies to the cause of the rebel Mizos that are mainly responsible for the continued conflict. It is an open secret that the Mizos are getting intensive military training centres such as Kasalong, Barkal, Bandarban and Rumaguard with the headquarters at Rangamati, all in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, which the Pakistan Government wants, to bargain with the rebel Mizos for its present support to the later. In these training centres, the Mizos get adequate training for the artillery and guerilla warfare with the modern and autometic weapons. After completing the training the Mizos smuggle the weapons into their own centres by giving slips to the security forces. Until this secret flow of arms to the Mizo is not stopped; the entire boundary of the Mizo Hills district is not sealed off; identify cards are not issued to all the people of the Mizo Hills district and other scientific methods and deviced (see my paper 'Strategy of the Mizo Hills District) are not taken to stop the illegal boundary crossing; the security forces will never have the upperhands to deal strongly with the warfare in the Mizo Hills district.

READ

HUMAN EVENTS

every month

3, British Indian Street, Calcutta-1.

SOME MOHAMMADAN CUSTOMS

SOME Mohammadan customs are described here. These are ancient customs but a great many of these are still available among the Musalmans at Muzaffarpur and its neighbourhood in Bihar. No doubt, owing to rapid change some of these customs have and are getting changed and modified. The customs traeated here are as old as the Musalman race. Similar customs have also been recorded in 'North Indian Notes and Querries' as early as 1895.

Recitation of Amin

In a Mahammadan family where there are members who can read and write, it is the fashion, when a child is born, for the teacher of the child's father or of the family to be sent for to say *Amin.* Accordingly, the said teacher brings all the boys from his school to the house where the child has been born, and there they recite aloud some verses, some of which are given below. At the end of each verse all the children in corus shout out with one voice, the word *Amin.* Then the parents or relations give to the teacher such reward as they can afford in money or kind. This practice is not one enjoyed by the law; it is in the nature of a congratulation and felicitation. There is no fixed month or day for it; but it is carried out not long after the birth. The verses are these

1. Hamad ast Khuda re	Eng: Praise is for God
O salwat mustaffa re	Prayers to the Pure one,
Har mir, har gada re	Let prince and pauper
Subhan mi rani	Shout "Praise the Lord".
2. Allah be-naziro	Eng: God He is peerless,
Ghaffar, dastgiri	Forgiving, helpful
Sultan be waziri	A king without counselor
Subhan mi rani	Shout "Praise the Lord."
3. Bubarkar, yar-i-ghar ast,	Eng: Burbarkar, a bosom friend
Kan-yar, ghani-kusar ast,	He is the sorrow-dispeller,
O har ahdae yar ast	.....
Subhan mi rani	Shout "Preaise the Lord".

4. Utmre kin bud adil, U adal gir o hasil, U rast nur-nazil, Subhan mi rani	Eng : Umr, who was just a man And a claimer of Justice, Just, given of light Shout "Praise the Lord"
5. Usman ibni Affan U jama kard Kuran Mi-khwand az dil o jan Subhan mi rani	Eng : Usman son of Aflan Gathered together the Kuran Read it with heart and soul Shout "Praise the Lord."
6. Haidar kin bud safdar Bar kunad babi khabar Salar Shah Haidar Subhan mi rani	Eng : Haidar, who was a hero, Uproots the gate of knowledge Salar Shah, the lion-hearted Shout "Praise the Lord."
7. Rasmi i tarab mihadi Dast i karm kushadi Bada hameshah shadi Bolo, "Hazar amin".	Eng : Start the joyful sounds, Put forth the hand of mercy, Be for ever happy Call aloud "So be it.
8. Ustad ghar par ae Larkon ko sath lae Dast-i-du ia uthae Bolo, "Hazar amin"	Eng : Teacher has come to the door, With him has brought his boys Raised his hand to blis Call aloud "So be it".
9. Khilat mangao bhari Khatir ho khush hamari De khne ke khalk sari Bolo, "Hazar amin"	Eng : Send for *arich* robe May my heart be gladdened, Let all the beholders Called aloud "so be it".
10. Larkah ko dada aen Tashrif yahan pah laen Nazaren mere mangaen Bolo, "Hazar amin"	Eng : The grandfather comes He honours this spot He sends for my presents, Call aloud "so be it".
11. Hathi do, ya kih ghora Jo kunkh kih do bhi thora La ashrfi ka tora Bolo, "Hazar amin."	Eng :. Give he an elephant or horse Whether it be, it is too little Bringout the bags of gold Call aloud "so be it".
12. Allah hamen parahate, Hathi upar charhate Dushman mera ghatate Bolo, "Hazar amin."	Eng : It is the Lord that teaches us Lifts us up to ride on elephants Brings low my enemy, Call aloud "so be it".

The Custom of Bismillah

On the day when a child is four years, four months and four days old, the people of the brotherhood, with other relations and friends, are called together through the *Mirasi* (professional singer) or the *Hajam*

(barbar). The message sent is : "At so-and-so's house there is today a *Bism-illah*. Accordingly, at the appointed time, all those invited assemble. The child, having been bathed and clothed in handsome new clothes, is brought into the midst of the gathering. Then some old man of wisdom and learning, makes the child repeat the words "bism-illah, arrahman, ur-rahim" (in the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful). When the child has said the whole of these words, all the company turn to the father, the brother, or other head of the household, and congratulate him. The words of the above *ayat* are engraved on a small tablet of silver, of the weight of one or two rupees. After the child has repeated the words, he hands this tablet, by way of reward, to the old man after whom he has said the words. It is not found that the performence of this ceremoney at the age of four years four months and our days is prescribed the religious laws. But it is possible that the practice arose for the purpose of fixing a day for commencing the child's education. Otherwise, there seems no reason for adhearing to four years, four months and four days exactly. On the day of this ceremony, small presents are also given to the servants and dependents of the house.

Circumcision

Circumcision (*Khatnah*) is incumbent on every male Mohammadan by the law of his religion. It is carried out by all classes. When the boy is seven or eight years of age, a date is fixed and all relations and friends far and near are informed. It is treated as an important ceremony and much trouble and expenses are naturally associated on it Singers and dancers are hired, food is prepared, both for the guests and for distribution is charity. A poor boy is allowed to go about as usual without the wound to heal. It heals in a week or ten days. Rich people and those of the middle classes make elaborate preparations. In the afternoon of the appointed day, all the relations and brethern assemble at the house. A chair is placed on a fixed place and on this the boy is seated. In towns and cities a man who is expert in the operation removes the membrance in the twinkling of an eye. Some boys of soft nature cry, others of their own accord seat themselves, smiling, upon a chair. As the cut is made the operator shouts "Din, Din, Muhammad". The assembly then offer their congratulations. If the operator is the barbar belonging to the house, he places a small *brass saucer*, such as, barbars use, in the centre of the room. All guests between whom and the master of the house there is interfamily adds to it according to his means. The family barbar takes the change of gifts on such occasions place in the saucer. The head of the

money. If the operator is not a family barbar, a seperate gift is made to him, say an *ashrfi* (a gold coin) or according to means of the performer. Sweetmeats, in the form of *batasha* or *zilapi*, are next distributed. Some families for the relations, sometime organise a public entertainment of singing and dancing. The women are entertained inside by *Domni* and other singers and dancers. The guests are fed choice food. A rich man usually will prolong the feast to four or five days but ordinary people keep it confine one for two days only. But men of sense, strict in their religion, fix a day, invite no one, have the boy circumcised, pay the operator, and refrain from other luxirious expenditure on singing, dancing and other things prohibited by the Mohammadan religion. No doubt, the general body of wealthy Mohammadans who have no sufficient learning or sense, nor feel bound by their law, but are plunged in the sea of ostentation, spend readily huge money on such occasions, and in the end find their hands become empty. They send letters on red paper in all directions. On the day fixed, there is a stampede (*dhawah*) to the house each invited guest arriving followed by all his return. Over an archway a place for the band has been prepared (a *nauhat-khana*) and for four or five days the kitchen fires are incessantly alight.

Mensturation

Before conclusion it may not be out of place to say a few words about observances connected with the mensturation. Among the Mohammadans there menstural impurity lasts for three days. During this period the woman does her household work, but engages in no religious ceremonies. While in this state she is prohibited from fasting (Roza or the kind observance). The impurity is ended by putting on clean clothes. There appear to be no special observances among orthodox Mohammadans in connection with first mensturation of a girl. Low class Mohammadans who are mainly of Hindu extraction follow the usual rules enforced among Hindus of the same rank in life. On this Dr. Haughes wrote in the 'Dictionary of Islam' that "during the period of mensturation woman are not permitted to say their prayers or to touch or read the Quaran or enter a mosque, and are forbidden to their husbands. But it is related in the traditions that Mohammad abrogated the law of Moses which let a mensturous woman apart for seven days", and Amar says, that when Jews heard this said "This man opposes our customs in everything".

This is a short note on certain Mohammadan custom which are still in force but due to complicated and industrial life some of these customs have been simplified and shortend in keeping with the tone of the day

BOOK-REVIEW

FOLKLORE OF WOMEN, As Illustrated by Legendary and Traditionary Tales, Folk-Rhymes, Proberbial Sayings, Superstitions, Etc. by Thiselton-Dyer, T. F. London Elliot Stock, 1966, 253 pages. Cited in Sonnenschein *The Best Books* 3rd Edition Reissued by Singing Tree Press, a division of the Gale Research Company, Detroit Michigan, 1968. L. C. 68-24475. $9.50.

This important book is now available as part of Singing Tree Press's series on Folklore and Mythology.

Brahmins were forbiden to marry red-headed women and Chinese folklore has it that beautiful women are unlucky. Is either prejudice justified ? Thiselton-Dyer avoided making judgments in favour of simply recording thousands of legends, customs, and superstitions about such matters as woman's love, her ficklessness, curiosity, will-power, talkativeness sdress, and tears. From where the author has compiled such items are not referred in the book item by item but in the preface he has given the names of some books that he had consulted.

Daughterhood, widowhood, and motherhood, he shows, have all been the subjects of innumerable stories and beliefs, from the West African story about a father who required his daughter's suitors to empty a brook with a nutshell, to a cynical German saying that "a rich widow weeps with one eye and laughs with the other."

Given the subject, it is no matter for wonder that even folklore is confusing. The author refuses to spare us contradictions. Whom do we believe—the English who say that "the man who would thrive must trust his wife" or the Africans who maintain that "a man who confides secrets to his wife will be led to the path of Satan"? The book containes many more details about the character, power, position, status etc. of the womenfolk in general in twentysix chapters. It is an important book where one will find proverbial wisdom of human race in its teachings of woman's character. It is a wonderful book and we will be glad to see it in every respectable library.

ANTHROPOLOGY AND ARCHAEOLOGY, *Essays in Commemoration of Verrier Elwin,* Edited by M. C. Pradhan, R. D. Singh, P. K. Misra and D. B. Sastry,, Oxford University Press, Bombay, Demy, 328 p. 1969 Rs. 30.00.

The book is a collection of fifteen essays of which two (Verrier Elwin as Anthropologist, Some Aspects of the Jat Religion and Ethics) are

written by Dr. M. C. Pradhan, one of the editors when the other three editors have no contribution. The remaining contributions are—Frank Fernandez (A Critique of Verrier Elwin's Anthropology: Hill Bondo Social Organization and Kinship Analysis), H. R. H. Prince Peter (Patterns of Polyandry in Tibet and India), P. G. Ganguly (Separatism in the Indian Polity: a case study), Beatrice Diamond Miller (Revitalization Movements: Theory and Practice, as evidenced among the Buddhists of Maharashtra), Kathleen Gough (Political Party Conflict in a Kerala Village), Harold A. Gould (A Theory of Social Stratification and the Case of Indian Society), Christoph Von Furer-Haimendorf (Morality and Prestige among the Nagas), John V. Ferreira (Finitude, Complementarity and Dependence in Primitive Societies), Francis L. K. Hsu (Christianity and the Anthropologist), Stephen Fuchs (Applied Anthropology in India), Norman Zide and R. D. Munda (Descriptive Dialogue Songs in Mundari), in Social Anthropology section. In the Prehistoric Archaeology Section there are the following articles D. Sen's Pebble Chopper Chopping tools and flakes in India and Pakistan etc. and V. N. Misara's Early village communities etc. It also contains twelve illustrations along with the frontispiece of Verrier Elwin.

The first part of the book begins with an assessment of Elwin's work. A fairly exhaustive Bibliography of Elwin's publication has also been added. Here one will find some added materials on Elwin's life which Elwin himself did not include in his "Tribal World". This anthology presents the creed of the anthropo archaeological studies in India. Oxford University Press has rendered commandable service not only by publishing Elwin's books but also by the anthology under review which is valuable and curious. The book will be useful for future researchers. The most valuable part of the anthology is the bibliography for which M. C. Pradhan will receives the thanks of all who are interested in the study of Indian anthropology, archaeology and tribal study.

GAMBHIRA : LOKSANGEET-O-UTSAB : EKAL O SEKAL (In Bengali—Gambhira. Folksong and festival, by P. Ghosh, Chakra & Co., Calcutta-26 Demy 92 pagt with protos and notations etc. 1968. Rs. 5.00.

A well-produced book written by a college teacher in the Dept. of Bengali, Mr. Pradyot Ghosh. It has different sub-titles, such as, meaning of festival, place of festival, chronology of festival, social consciousness, social education, so on and so forth. The book also contains some notations in Indian style. The author has tried to introduce, Gambhira, a regional folk song and festival of Gaur Banga (Maldah district of West Bengal) in his book. We shall be glad if this book gets its place in the library.

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HARI S. UPADHYAYA

STUDIES IN THE PHILIPPINE FOLKTALES AND THEIR INDIN VERSIONS

Perhaps the history of tale composition in India starts from the *Rigveda*, the oldest available literature of India. In *Rigveda* the Bramhanns are compared to croaking frogs. The *Upanishads* have preserved some animal tales in which animals are mentioned advising men. There are also characters that represent half-animal half human being. The *Mahabharata* is a great store-house of tale inside tales in which the wars of Kuras and Pandavas are the content of the epic. The Buddhists tried to establish relationship between man and animal. They choose by relating beast stories to illustrate the deeds and greatness of the Buddha in his former birth. The *Jataka* tales which numberred not less than five hundred fifty contain didactic fables—illustrating the wisdom of the Buddha in his previous life. The contributions of the *Jataka Mala* in his history of Indian folktale is very significant. Mostly these tales went to China, Japan, Indonesia, Philippine and Southeast Asian countries with Buddhist monks and traders. *Nitisastra, Arthashastra*, and *Dharmshastra* have preserved valuable tales pertaining to morality and everyday life. Here is a study by Dr. Hari S. Ppadhyaya on Philippine Folktales with their Indian paralles. Dr. Upadhyaya is well-known to our readers as a young energetic scholar who has got advanced traininfi in folklore study in the States.

I

The *Panchatantra*, composed with intention to instruct the naughty princes of a king, is the most important book of Indian fables. It has greatly influenced the folktale literature of the East and West. There are several texts of this work but the Pahlavi text seems to be composed before 570 A. D. The *Hitopadesh* was composed by Narayan Pandit who

flourished in the 14th century A. D. The purpose of this work is to instruct the royal princess in the art of politics, morality, and worldly wisdom. The *Brihatkatha* is composed by Gunadhya, the court poet of the king Hala. Several scholars are of opinion that this voluminous composition is of the first century A. D., which was originally composed in *Paishachi* language. *Brihatkatha Manjari* is the product of the versatile genius Kshemendra, who abridged the entire story of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* in 7500 Slokas (Couplets) in 11th century A. D. This huge composition pertains bird and beast tales of various type. Somadeva, the ascribed writer of the *Katha Sarita Sagar* (Ocean of Story), was a Saiva Brahman of Kashmir. He wrote this immortal work between 1063 and 1081 A. D. in order to divert the troubled mind of the princess Suryamati. *Vaital Panchavinshatika,* a collection of twenty five folktales, was written by Shivadas. Shuka-Sapatati is a collection of seventy tales told by a parrot.[1]

II

Emphasizing the importance of the Philippine Archipelago, Fansler writes that from "the very nature of its geographical position and its political history" Philippine stands at the junction of East and West with its heterogeneous ethnic groups—Tagalog, Bagobo, Visayan, Igorot, Negrito, Pampangan, Zambal, Pangasinan, Ilocano, and Bicol.[2] It is ethnically connected with China, Japan Malayasia, and India. After the occupation of Philippine islands by Spaniards.

Many folktales which were current in Europe were brought by Spanish and Portuguese missionaries and tradesmen to this Archipelago. Fansler thinks that the Hindu beast tales of the Jataka might have circled the globe in their progress from East and thus have been introduced to the Filipino by the Spaniards and Portuguese.[3]

Indian culture and folklore travel to Southeast by two routes: First, Indian Buddhist monks went to Japan and Philippine via China; second, by sea route to Indonesian and Philippine. Buddhist influence on Philipine folktales appears to be much greater than Hindu influence. In the present paper thirteen Philipine folktales from Fansler's Filipino Popular Tales are presented with their Indian versions, to demonstrate the diffusion of Indian folktales in the Philippine islands.

PHILIPPINE TALE NO. 1

Juan and his Adventures:

Juan and his Adventures[4]: A poor old couple had three daughters. The old man used to sale leaves of a certain tree for their livelihood. Gradually he became a rich man and built a big palace. Once the old

man planned to chop off the tree and sell it. When he cut down the tree a miraculous snake came out of the roots and immediately demanded his three daughters. He came home and told everything to his wife and the daughters. After giving handerchiefs to their mother, the three daughters bid farewell. They reached near the chopped off tree and suddenly disappeared.

Within a year the old couple gave birth to a son and called him Juan. When he became eighteen years old, Juan set out in search of his sisters carrying their handerchiefs. Somehow the adventurous Juan could trick to get a magical cap, a pair of sandals and a key. With help of the magical objects he met his sisters and brothers-in-law, who pledged to offer assistance whenever Juan needed.

Juan on his way back met a king whose daughter was stolen away. With the help of his magical objects and the brother-in-law, he could secure the box with a bird and an egg which contained the life of the gaint who had stolen the princess. He killed the bird and free the princess along with other women from the gaint's dark prison. The king offered his kingdom to Juan and made him a king. Let us come to its Indian parellel.

INDIAN VERSIONS NO. 1

Mahavanija Jataka :

Mahavanija Jataka[5] refers to a similar tree motif tale, where some merchants of Savathi are described ; who lost their way into a jungle. They grew hungry and thirsty. The merchants saw a big banyan tree and thought they could get some water. One of the merchants cut a branch and got a great quantity of water. Another merchant cut the branch from the southern side of the tree and got many things to eat. When the merchants cut down the branches from the western and northern side got a beautiful woman and five hundred loaded carts. The greedy merchant, finally chopped of the tree whereupon a serjpent king came out and punished them all.

Even to the present day the banyan tree is an object of great veneration in different regions of India. It is regarded as an abode of different gods and goddesses. Women folk may worship this tree to get son, wealth, good husband, and prosperity etc. Besides Tulsi plant and Neem tree, banyan tree are the most sacred to the Hindus.*

In the *Dadhi Jataka*[6] one finds elements of magical objects motif of the Filipino "Juan and his Adventure" tale. The Jataka story refers to four Brahman brothers of Kashi who became hermits. After some time

* Interested readers may read "Tree Symbol Worship in India", ed. with an introd. by Sankar Sen Gupta, Calcutta, 1965.

the oldest of all ceased to live on the earth and was reborn as a *Sakha* (friend) As he was kind and generous he visited his brothers. He gave them a fire axe, a razor which produced fire ; a drum if played on one side, enemies would run away and if played on another side enemies would be befriended ; a milk bowl, if it is turned upside down a flooded river could be immediately produced or a river could be held in it. These magical objects proved great help to his brothers. But a man from Kashi (or Beneras, U. P.), who had a fictitious germ of a boar, came to the three brothers and bartered all their magical objects for the germ. He finally killed all the hermits with the axe and got back his germ. After coming back to Kashi, he forced the king to surrender his kingdom. The king did so because he was aware of the magical elements.

The tale elements of the Philipine tale (No. 1.) are not only found in the ancient Jataka stories but similar tale elements are available in the folktales of different parts of India. M. Stoke[7] has collected a tale wherein a hero meets four Fakirs (mendacants) whose teacher had died and he has left four objects behind him—a bed which can carry whoever sits on it and wheresoever he wishes to go ; a bag that gave it possessor as much as he wanted ; and a stick that could beat an enemy ; and a rope that could tie him.

A Bhojpuri folktale[8] represents the elements of greediness in the tale No. 1. A man had a hen which he used to lay and got golden egg daily. The greedy owner thought to kill the hen and sell all her golden eggs at one time and become rich. He killed the hen but found only one egg which shocked him and he died.

PHILIPPINE TALE NO. 2

Who is the Nearest Relative ?[9]

Who is the Nearest Relative ?[9]

Julian, the grandfather told his grandson, Antonio, the following tale and demanded its answer.

Grandfather said, there lived a young man. After completing his studies he was to become a priest. But according to tradition his ancestry was traced and his mother's brother was found an insurreto. The young man really wanted to become a priest, so he set out in search of his maternal uncle, Paulino. Antionio found him but did not come back home. After sometime his father went out to look for this young son but he too, did not return and stayed with his son. It so happened that a royal army captured them and they were ordered to be hanged soon. Josefa, when she came to know, approached the general of the army and requested him to set free her son, her husband, and the brother. The admiral general after her repeated requests asked Josefa to choose only one of her dearest relatives to be set free. She fell into perplexed con-

dition and did not know whom to choose.

The grandfather ended the story and asked the grandson, "tell whom will Josefa choose to be set free . After seven days Antonio came up with a solution and answered to Julian, "Grandfather, the woman will ask her brother to be freed, because she can marry again and have a husband and son, but when her parents are dead, she could not have a brother . Pleased with the woman the king set all three men free.

INDIAN VERSIONS NO. 2

Ucchanga Jatawa[10] describes a story wherein three men have been described arrested by mistake on the charge of robbery and have been jailed. The wife of one of them goes to the king of Kosal, where the event had taken place, and she entreats to set free her relatives. The king asks her what relation each of the three is to her. She answers, "Lord, first one is my husband, second one is my brother and the third is my son." The king says to her, "I am pleased with you and I will give you one of your three relatives. Which one do you choose ?" The woman answers, "Majesty, if I live I can get another husband and a son, but my parents are dead thus I can never have another brother."

Jataka story speaks of the period when it was possible for a woman to get another husband. However this is not true in the traditional India. Philippine Tale No. 2 might have taken this element when it was practiced in India.

PHILIPPINE TALE

The Monkey and the Turtle[11] **:**

A turtle had a very cunning and selfish monkey as his friend. Once it so happened that both started on a journey when monkey ran out of his provisions he tricked the turtle and got all of his eatables from him.

While the monkey and the turtle were travelling, a hunter all of a sudden caught the turtle. Monkey ridiculed the turtle. The hunter was a good man and he used to give him many things to eat. The monkey once passed by where the turtle lived and was enticed with turtle's pleasant life. He urged the turtle to let him be in his place. At first the turtle did not agree but at last he accepted monkey's proposition. The next morning when the hunter found a monkey in place of turtle, he shot it dead.

INDIAN VERSIONS

Kachapa Jataka :

Kacchapa Jataka[12] narrates a story how a monkey who insulted a

tortoise by thrusting his penis down the sleeping tortoise's throat and was punished.

Mahisa Jataka[13] tells a story of an impudent monkey who voids his excrement on a patient buffalo under a tree. The vile monkey is later destroyed when he plays the same trick on another bull.

Kapi Jataka[14] also narrates a story of a mischievous monkey who dropped his excrement first on the hand of a royal priest and afterwards in his mouth. This infuriated the priest so much so that he advised the king to kill all the monkeys of the royal garden and use their fat for preparing certain drugs.

Bad monkey tale types are also found in Tibet.[15] It is a tale which refers to the people who wanted to kill all the monkey but one of them escaped and set fire in the village. Such tales are prevalent in India.

PHILIPPINE TALE

The Greedy Crown[16]**:**

One day a crow found a piece of meat on the ground. While he was sitting on the branch of a tree, the crow saw a little bird carrying a dead rat. With intention of taking the dead rat away he asked the little bird twice to halt. But she did not listen to him. The enraged crow chashed the bird out but could not get her. Meantime a hawk flew to the branch and picked up the meat left by the crow. When the crow returned tired and exhausted he could not find the piece of meat left by his earlier.

A very similar theme is found in Culladhanuggaha Jataka[17] wherein an unfaithful wife is described cheated by her paramour: A Brahmin's son after mastering archery returns from Taxila with his wife. He meets many robbers in a forest. The Shrewd leader of the robber's gang takes no time in recognizing the great hero and abandons the idea of attacking him. The hero's wife falls in love with the leader and kills her husband. The chief of the robbers' takes her to a stream and strips off all her garments. She cries. Lord Indra sees her weeping on the bank of a river. He, along with two other friends, come down to rebuke and scold her. Indra transforms himself into a jackal and carries a piece of meat in his mouth. The jackal goes in the front of the wailing woman and tries to catch a fish. Meanwhile a bird comes and takes away his meat. The woman laughs at the jackal and says:

> "O silly jackal, thou must wish
> Though hadst not lost both flesh and fish.
> Poor fool! Well mayst thou grieve to see
> What comes of thy stupidity"!

Then the jackal replies :

"Another faults are plainly seen,
'Tis hard to see one's own, I ween.
Methinks thou too must count to cost
When spouse and lover both are lost.

This type of tale is also found in the *Panchatantra*.[18]

PHILIPPINE TALE

The Camanchile and the Passion[19] **:**

In a forest Camanchile lived spreading its branches in all directions. Near this tree there were many other trees which had beautiful flowers and fragrance which attracted travellers. The Camanchile had no fragrance thus no traveller came to it. Once the tree made a lamenting exclamation that nobody come to it. A vine by the name of "Passion" heard the exclamation and approached near it. The Passion politely begged its permission to grow on its branches so that many travellers would come. But soon the Passion proved fatal to its growth and finally killed the Camanchile.

INDIAN VERSION

Palasa Jataka[20] narrates a story of the similar type : A royal goose use to pass to-and-fro a big Judas tree and soon both developed a friendly relation. There was a young banyan tree. The royal goose forwarned the deity of the Judas tree of the imminent danger caused by banyan's growth. But the big Judas tree never cared, thinking itself tall and powerful. However the time came when the banyan tree spread all over and overshadowed the Judas tree and the deity of the tree had to move elsewhere.

PHILIPPINE TALE

The Monkey and the Dragon Flies[21] **:**

It was very hot when a fatigued dragon fly had sat on a branch of a tree, where the king of the monkey used to live. Her unwanted presence annoyed the monkey king and he threatened to destroy her. She went to her brother, the king of the dragon flies, and complained against the monkey king. Her brother wrote a letter to the king of the monkeys threatening to wage a war against him. Very soon both side met at the battle field. The powerful monkeys looked down upon flies at the beginning but when the war started flies sat down on the heads of the monkeys. In attempt to drive the flies away each monkey started

striking on the head of other monkeys and thus killed themselves and flies won the war.

INDIAN VERSIONS

The similar theme is found in *Latukika Jataka*.[22] Brahma Dutta ruled over Varanasi when Boddhistva was born as an elephant. He used to live in a forest commanding over eighty thousand elephants. In the same forest lived a quail with her young ones. Once the quail requested the king of the elephants, Boddhistva, and secured safety from him. But in the same forest a rough elephant used to live who unmindful of the quails strength, destroyed all of her children. The quail pledged to destroy him. She befriended a crow and urged him to pick out the eyes of the elephant. She went to the fly and the fly consented to lay eggs in the elephant's eyes. The frog agreed to create illusion of a pond around the blinded elephant. Once the arrogant elephant was going somewhere, the crow picked up his eyes, the fly laid her eggs in the cavity of his eyes and the frog started croaking from the top of the hill and the foothill. In search of water the elephant ran up and down the hill, he broke his legs and died.

There is a Bhojpuri folktale which portray the similar theme wherein an insignificant bird challenges a powerful opponent and with the help of her friends she eventually defeats her enemy.

PHILIPPINE TALES

Juan the Orphan[23]**:**

Juan parents died leaving behind nothing but a horse. Juan's uncle did not like the beautiful horse and secretly killed him. Poor Juan took horse's meat and gave it to a hungry man who gave him a bagful of money when he came home his uncle knew of the happening. He killed his own fifteen horses. But he did not get higher price on their meat as Juan had got. He grew angry and put the boy in a sack and threw him into the water. Juan somehow managed to come out and befollowed his uncle by throwing him into the water.

INDIAN VERSION

A tale of similar type is found among the Santal tribe by Bompas.[24] The tale is known as "Seven Tricks and Single Trick." Both were great friends. But Seven Tricks felt offended if someone told him that the Single Trick was cleverer than him. Once Seven Tricks was invited by Single Trick at dinner. At that time Single Trick began to beat his wife

with a club and turned her into a beautiful girl. The following night Seven Tricks came to Single Trick's home and stole the club. He, too, beat his wife severely but she did not become a beautiful girl.

Second time Seven Tricks came to see Single Trick and both went to a forest. Before leaving for the forest Single Trick asked his wife to keep a hare. In the forest when Single Trick saw a hare he let loose his coward dog and said to him to chase the hare directly to his home. After the arrival Seven Tricks found the hare already there. He stole the Single Trick's dog and tried to do the same thing, he could not get a hare in his home.

For the third time Seven Tricks visited Single Trick and both went for fishing. Single Trick, before leaving, asked his wife to keep an alive fish in a water pot. Both friends went to the bank of a river and Single Trick caught a fish and threw it on the ground with his fishing rod saying that it would reach his home by itself. After the arrival to his utter surprise the Seven Tricks found an alive fish there. He stole the fishing rod and tried to send fish at his home but could not do it.

PHILIPPINE TALE

How Suan Became Rich[25]**:**

Once Suan fell down on an old man and the man died. The son of the old man decided to sue Suan. Meanwhile Suan saw a barbekin having difficulty in getting his carabao out if the mire. He brought the carabao out but it lost the tail. The owner immediately sued him. Culprit was asked to present himself before the king. After hearing the case, the king gave right to the old man's son to jump on Suan from the bridge and asked the owner of the carabao to give his carabao to Suan until its tail comes out. Both paid a huge amount and went away.

Another Filipino story, "The King's Decision"[26] also depicts of a funny manner of judgment which upsets the persons wro sue Juan: Once Juan was very hungry and he smelt some food being cooked in the kitchen of a rich man and his hunger died. The rich man forced him to pay money and sued him in the law court. Juan ran away. He saw a horse, and rescued him from mud. But the horse lost the tail. The owner of the horse threatened to sue him. Again Juan ran away. He scared his host's wife, who due to fear had a miscarriage. When at the end Juan was arrested and brought in the court. The king ordered that Juan should have the horse until its tail comes out and the woman until she conceives. According to the king's judgment Juan got the hose and the woman.

INDIAN VERSIONS

Parker[27] has collected a similar folktale from Ceylon: There was a man who borrowed an elephant but the animaal died before it could be returned. The borrower offered payment on another elephant instead. But the owner would accept nothing but his own elephant alive. The clever borrower somehow managed the obdurate man to break a waterpot, and in return demanded his very waterpot unbroken. Unable to do anything else, the owner of the elephant cancelled each others debts and went away.

Such foolish judgement type tales are common in India. The *Ocean of the Story*[28] refers to a washerman's donkey who ate vegetables from the field fo a Brahman woman. The owner chased the donkey, who broke its leg. The washerman beat the Brahman woman who had a miscarriage. When the case went to the court the judge decided that washerman should make the Brahman woman pregnant and she should heal the donkey's leg.

PHILIPPINE TALE

Suan's Good Luck[29]:

Suan had an old mother. She always wanted to send her son to a school. But Suan, despite of going to the school, used to sit on a bransh of a tree and whenever his mother used to come back from the market with many purchases, he would watch them. The old woman was not able to see this. Suan after arrival at the home would tell the names of the pushed articles. His foretelling lost long. His mother got convinced that her son was a soothsayer. Once the daughter of a chieftain lost her ring and Suan could find it with help of soldier. Gradually the stupied Suan became a famous soothsayer.

INDIAN VERSIONS

This tale has its close structural resemblance with a Bhojpuri folktale which narrates how a foolish Brahman became, just by sheer chance, a reputed soothsayer: A Brahman used to live with his wife. Once the Brahman came from outside and hid himself to see what he was doing. Just after talking to his wife for a while he told his wife what she had cooked. The princess of the kingdom lost her ring. Since the Brahman had become a known soothsaver, he was summoned by the king and asked to find out the lost ring. Knowing his inability to do such a job and the fear of losing his head made the Brahman sad. However he asked the ruler to allow him a period of seven days for the discovery. Three nights passed but he could not find out anything. The king had a maid

named "Sleep". The maid heard the reputation of the Brahman and was fearful of being arrested. She went to the place on the fourth night where the soothsayer had stayed and bid herself. She heard the desperate voice of the Brahman who was trying to fall asleep and muttering, "O dear sleep come!" "O dear sleep come!" The maid thought that the soothsayer had already found out about her. She immeditely presented herself before the Brahman and handed over the princess's ring which she had stolen. The Brhman gave the ring to the king and was appointed as the royal astrologer.

Parker[30] presents a tale which speaks of a stupid soothsayer who after sometime came to receive royal patronage.

PHILIPPINE TALE

Juan Wearing a Monkey's Skin[31] :

An old couple had a son. The father wanted to put an end to his son's life, because he was born with monkey's skin on ; however his mother kept him secretly. When the monkey-son became young he left his parents and the country. After sometime Juan dreamt of a princess who had been kept on a mid-sea island. He informed the king about it. The king promised his daughter's hand in marriage to him if he could bring her to the palace.

Juan set out in the search of the island. He saw a bird in restless condition and freed it. Being grateful for Juan the bird wanted to serve him. It flew to the island and somehow got the magical ring and gave it to Juan. With the help of the magical ring he could secure the services of some witches who constructed a connecting bridge between the island and the mainland. Juan forced the princess to come with him. Though unwilling, she had to come to the palace. Due to certain reasons the royal couple refused to recognize thir daughter. Seeing a monkey as her permanent companion, the princess looked sad. Juan sensed it and thus changed himself into a handsome young man. Juan and princess came again to the palace and the king recognized them.

INDIAN VERSIONS

Bompas[32] had collected three such tales from the Santals about the marriage between monkey and a human girl.

A. "The Monkey Boy" :

A man who had six sons and two daughters, died living behind his pregnant wife. After some time his wife gave birth to a monkey child.

Despite continous protest by the villagers for abandoning the monkey child, the woman did not leave him. Thus she was forced to leave the village and live on the outskirt. The elder brothers of the monkey used to ridicule him. The monkey somehow got a fast running mare and defeated his brothers in race. After a few years he became rich and wanted to marry. Once he went on the bank of a river where many girls were taking bath nakedly. He picked up the garments of one of the girls and sat on the branch of the tree. The girl urged him to give back her clothes. But the monkey did not listen to her. At last she had to accept the monkey's offer and marry him.

B. "The Monkey and The Girl"[33]:

In this tale a girl described marrying a Hannuman (a big monkey). But her angry relatives killed the monkey and waited to creamate him. The girl blinded her relatives and mounted on the funeral pyre and burned herself with Hannuman.

C. "The Monkey Husband"[34]:

A Hannuman stole the clothes of a girl. He sat on a tree, and consented to give the clothes back if one of them marries him. The girl's relatives did not want it but the powerful Hannuman could not be defeated by them. The girl had to marry the monkey. Both lived together for sometime but the wife secretly deserted the monkey and married a villager.

Philippine Tale

The Sun God and the Moon God[35]:

The Moon requested the Sun to devour the stars and the Sun readily accepted it. But afterwards the Moon decieved the Sun and hid herself. The Sun grew angry with the Moon and started chasing her. And still he does. Whenever the Sun comes near her, there is an eclipse. Even to the present day the Sun is cashing the Moon and devouring stars. That is why days and nights are there.

There are many such mythical stories prevalent in north-eastern and middle India. Mostly these type of tales are common among the Santals, the Mundas the Birhos and other tribes of India.

Philippine Tale

The Monkey and the Crocodile[36]:

A. A clever Monkey, in search of food, saw a fruit laden tree on the bank of a river. After eating the fruits he wanted to cross the

flood river. So he befriended a crocodile. The crocodile agreed to carry him to the other side of the bank. The monkey comfortably sat on his back. When the crocodile came in the mid-river, showed intention to eat monkey's liver and kindey. But the cunning monkey duped him by telling that his kidney and liver were on the tree. Both returned to the bank, the monkey jumped and ran away.

B. A cunning monkey wanted to cross a river, meanwhile he saw a crocodile and urgetl to carry him to the other side of the river. He told the crocodile that on the other side he could get many monkeys to eat. But when the monkey reached on the bank, duped the crocodile and ran away. Once crocodile lied down their motionless and got hold of the money but again he tricked and escaped.

INDIAN VERSIONS

Vanarind Jataka tells a story of the crocodile who lays on a rock to catch monkeys, and how the latter outwits the crocodile.[37]

Sumsumara Jataka[38] narrates the story of the Boddhisatva when he wa sborn in the shape of a monkey near the Himalayan mountain. On one of the turning points of the Ganges he lived with his fellow monkeys. There lived a crocodile. Once the wife of the crocodile wanted to eat heart of a monkey. The crocodile befriend with one of the monkeys and requested him to come to the other side of the river with him. The monkey agreed and sat on the crocodile's back to cross the river. When they reached in the deep water the crocodile threw the monkey to the water and told him that his wife wanted to eat his heart. The cunning monkey told the crocodile that he had left his heart near the tree and that he would like to fetch it. Both returned ashore and the monkey escaped.

A Bhojpuri tale from the northern India speaks of a crocodile who befriended a monkey and wanted to kill him because his wife longed to eat monkey's liver: Once upon a time there lived a monkey on the bank of the river Jamuna. There used to live a crocodile in the waters of Jamuna. Both the monkey and the crocodile become great friends. The crocodile asked the monkey to come with him to home and on the way told the monkey that his wife wanted to eat his heart. Monkey said "O dear friend. I forgot to bring my heart with me. It is on the blackberry tree". When both returned to pick up the heart of the monkey, the cunning monkey ran away.

There are a few tales with the above framework current in India in which a clever animal jackal has taken the place of the monkey. Rouse[39] had collected a tale pertaining to a jackal and tortoise: A jackal sees melons on the other side of the river and wants to have them.

Meanwhile he sees a tortoise. "How are you and your family, dear tortoise", asked the jackal. "I am all well, dear jackal," replied the tortoise. After some time the tortoise expressed his desire to marry. The jackal told him that many persons across the river had asked him to find a match for their daughters. Thereon the tortoise readily accepted his plan to go to the other side of the bank. He carried the jackal on his back. The cunning jackal after eating melons dressed up a dry tree and showed it to the tortoise telling him that she is his bride. But he told him, "as long as I am here she will not speak. Carry me to the other side of the river and come alone, then she will speak to you." The tortoise, after taking the jackal back to the other side came alone to meet the girl but he found that he was cheated. He pledge to avenge but the jackal duped him again and again.

In the Temple and Steel Collection a partridge is described inducing a crocodile to carry the jackal across the river and upset him. But the jackal pretends that he has left his "wife" behind him on the other side of the river and thus saves himself.[40]

The authors have collected another story wherein a jackal makes love to a crocodile and induces her, under the promise of marriae, to swim him across the stream as he wants to eat some fruits. After the jackal finishes eating the crocodile brings him back. The jackal grows colder. The crocodile plans to revenge. Once she catches the leg of the jackal, but the cunning jackal tells her that she has caught a root. The foolish crocodile leaves the leg and the jackal escapes. The crocodile goes to the jackal dens to kill him. She lies near the den as if she were dead. When the jackal sees her says, "the dead always wag their tails." The crocodile wags her tail and the jackal runs away.

Philippine Tale

With One Contavo Juan Marries a Princess[41] :

There was a poor gambler who lost all his wealth in cards and cock fighting. He left his village penniless and went to another village. There he bought a cake. He ate half of the cake and kept the rest, and slept. Meanwhile a chicken came there and ate the remaining cake. He awoke and caught the chicken and claimed it as his own because it had eaten his cake. The owner of the chicken tried hard to get it back but he failed. The poor man left the village and fell asleep near a barber's shop. The dog because it had eaten his chicken. He went to a third village where an iron bar fell on the dog and the dog died. Juan picked up the iron bar and carried it on the bank of a river while he was crossing the river the iron bar fell into the water. He claimed that area as his own. On the

bank he waited for three days. It so happened that there a princess came and bathed in the area and was claimed by Juan. He immediately caught the princess and claimed her as his own. The king has to marry the princess with Juan.

INDIAN VERSIONS

Cullaka Sethi Jataka refers to a similar tale, wherein a person standing with no greater capital than a dead mouse, is depicted succeding in making a huge fortune.[42]

M. Stoke's[43] tale is very similar to Pilipino folktale, there in a man is replaced by a mouse. A mouse struck with thorns went to a barber who cut his tail to cure him. But the mouse ran away with his razor and gave it to a grass cutter as a gift. But when it was broken, the mouse insisted on get it back. The grasscutter was unable to return his broken razor so the mouse ran away with his blanket. The mouse gave the blanket to a merchant and ran away with his sugarcanes and gave them to a sweet seller. He took some sweets and gave them to boys and roped all their cows and gave them to a king. After giving the cows he married the king's daughter. The mouse gave his bride to some jugglers. She was killed during performing magics. To punish the juggler he took away their tents, and other properties and settled down in a city. Due to luxurious living he became very fat. To lessen the fat the mouse asked a carpenter to cut some of his flesh. The carpenter cut his flesh, the mouse died.

Stoke's Mouse in Kingscote's[44] Collection of Tales has been transformed into a monkey who plays the same role as mentioned in the Stoke's tales: A monkey went to a barber to have throns taken out from his tail. But the barber cut his tail. The monkey takes away the barbar's razor. The monkey gives that razor to an old woman and takes pudding from her and exchanges for some other thing from a hungry tomtom.

Bompas'[45] and Bhojpuri tales are the same. The youngest of the six brothers made ten rupees who stated with an anna. Bhojpuri tales gives a vivid description how six princess were asked by the king to take equal amount of money and start business. Only the youngest son could do well and the rest of the sons failed to make out a fortune for themselves.

NOTES

1. Most of the material of this section has been taken from K. D. Upadhyaya's. "A General Survey of Indian Folktales," Published in *Internationaler Kongres der Volker Zahlungsforscher in Kiel Aud Kopenhagen* (Berlin, 1961), pp. 432-445.
2. *Ibid.*, preface, p. VII.
3. *Ibid.*, preface, p. VII.
4. Fansler, *Filipino popular Tales*, No. 18, p. 171.
5. E. B. Cowell, *The Jataka* or *Stories of the Buddha's Former Births*, Vol. IV, No. 493, p. 221 (Cambridge).

6. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, No. 186, p. 69.

7. M. Stoke, *Indian Fairy Tale* (Calcutta, 1879) p. 153-63.

8. Bhojpuri is a dialect Hindi spoken in Eastern Uttar Pradesh and Western Bihar, India.

9. Fansler, *Filipino Popular Tales*, No. 31, p. 257.

10. M. V. Fausboll, *Five Jatakas* (Copenhagen, Leipsic, London, MDCCLXI), No. 67.

11. Fansler, *Filipino Popular Tales*, No. 55C, p. 369.

12. Cowell, *Jataka's* or *Stories of the Buddha's Former Birth*, Vol. II, No. 273, p. 246.

13. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, No. 278, p. 262.

14. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, No. 404, p. 218.

15. W. R. S. Ralston, *Tibetan Tale*, No. XLII.

16. Fansler, *Filipino Popular Tales*, No. 61, p. 391.

17. Cowell, *Jataka*, or *Stories of the Buddha's Former Birth*, Vol. III, No. 374, p. 144148.

18. T. Benfey, *Pantschatantra*, V. VIII, Cited by Fansletr, *Filipino Popular Tales*, No. 63, p. 394.

19. Fansler, *Filipino Popular Tales*, No. 63, p. 391.

20. Cowell, *Jataka*, or *Stories of the Buddha's Former Births*, Vol. III, No. 370, p. 137-138.

21. Fansler, *Filipino Popular Tales*, No. 57, p. 379.

22. Cowell, *Jataka*, or *Stories of the Buddha's Former Births*, Vol. III, No. 357, p. 115.

23. Fansler, *Filipino Popular Tales*, No. 20E, p. 192.

24. C. H. Bhompas, *Folklore of the Santal Paraganas*, (London, 1909 ?) No. 80, p. 242. See also, *Indian Antiquary*, 3 · 11f.

25. Fansler, *Filipino Popular Tales*, No. 5a, p. 35.

26. *Ibid.*, No. 5a, p. 35.

27. Mr. Parker, *Village Folktales of Ceylon*, 3rds (London, 1910 1914), Vol III, No. 203, pp. 110-111.

28. Quoted by Fansler, pp. 40-41.

29. Fansler, *Philipino Popular Tales*, No. 1a, p. 1.

30. Parker, *Village Tales of Ceylon*, Vol. I, No. 23, pp. 179-185.

31. Fansler, *Filipino Popular Tales*, No. 19, p. 178.

32. Bompas, *Folklore of the Santal Parganas*, No. XV, pp. 56-600.

33. *Ibid.*, No. XXXII, pp. 128-129.

34. *Ibid.*, No. LXX, pp. 212-214.

35. Ruddi Rahmann, "Quarrels and Enmity Between the Sun and the Moon," (A contribution to the mythologies of the Philippine, Indian, and the Malaya Peninsula) *Folklore Studies*, Vol. XIV, pp. 202, 1955.

36. Fansler, *Flipino Popular Tales*, No. 56A, B, p. 374.

37. Cowell, *Jataka or Stories of the Buddha's Former Births*, Vol. I ,No. 57.

38. *Ibid*, Vol. II, No. 208, p. 110.

39. W. H. D. Rouse and W. Crooke, *The Talking Thrush*, (London, 1899), No. 20, p. 85.

40. R. C. Temple and F. A. Steel, *Wide Awake Stories*, (Tales of the Punjab), (Bombay, 1884), No. XXI, p. 178 ; No. XXXI, p. 243.

See also, M. Frese, *Old Deccan Days* (London, 1889), "The Alligator and the Jackal", No. XXIV, p. 211.

Bompas, *Folklore of the Santal Parganas*, "The Jackal and the Leopards," No. CXXII, p. 340.

41. Fansler, *Filipino Popular Tales,* No. 32, p. 262.

42. Cowell, *Jataka or Stories of the Buddha's Former Births,* Vol. I, No. 4, pp. 14-20.

See also, Knatchbull, *Kalilah and Dimnah,* Chapter, XVIII, p. 358.

43. Stoke, *Indian Fairy Tales,* No. XVII, pp. 101-107.

See also, Temple and Steel, *Wide Awake Stories,* "The Rat's Wedding," No. 2, pp. 17-26.

Same Tale is published in the *Indian Antiquary,* XI, p. 226.

44. H. Kingscoe and N. Sastri, *Tales of the Sun,* No. XIV, p. 187.

See also, *The Talking Thrush,* No. 32, p. 132.

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SANKAR SEN GUPTA

WOMEN IN ANCIENT LITERATURE AND FOLKLORE

(Continued from previous issue)

Ancient literatures are a reservoir of accumulated folk wisdom which serves the people as instruction and is known as an effective aid to the masses. How to do better things, how to live peacefully, how to avoid evil things, how to prevent pain and disaster are the teachings they learnt from the elders. All these find a necessary resort to a number of literary devices which is the starting point of the making of folklore everywhere.

The makers of folklore are conscious to the fact when teaching by direct method or by work rather than exemplary deed, they are in need of gaining the confidence in them by the listners and holding attention of whom they are meant for. This depends upon the topic which is to be presented folkways. Gradually it got its literary form—folk literature—which is the most aristocratic form among the different types of folklore. It has naturally tremendous influence on the folk people since it is a product of folk-stock. Once attention had gained and held, the "lesson" they wish to impress or the communications they want to pass on has to be formulated in such a way that the listners grasp folklore readily and firmly retain in their memory.[127] To succeed in their objectives, the creators of folklore related experiences of great importance to their audience, or, by their imaginative presentation, made the experiences appear of great importance. Sometimes these teachings were given simultaneously with joyous and joyful activities—through songs, dances, dramas etc. which comes to the action type of folklore.[128] The implications of the words of songs, *chharas*, proverbs, sayings, etc. had to be such that those who heard them would greatly benefit by remembering. Finally it was imperative for those who used only oral instruction to reduce the basic idea to a few words, which, by their sense and form, would captivate the imagination and remain secure in the memory.

127. See "definition of the word folklore" in SDFML, Funk & Wagnalls, U.S.A.

128. Sen Gupta, Sankar *A Survey of Folklore Study in Bengal*: West Bengal and East Pakistan, Indian Publications, Calcutta, 1967.

This pedagogic need gave rise quite early to a great variety of literary forms in which the fable, the allegory, the proverb, the riddle, the parable, the myth, etc. are part and parcel. All these are grouped with a single word "folklore" which is the accumulated knowledge of homogeneous people. These forms of folklore, in most cases, share the characteristic leading in the mind of the listners to inevitable conclusion. Actually, the conclusions are first, for most of the oral forms, especially in religious materials. There must have some aims for such instructions which often took the form of proverbs, sayings, or the kind folk literature that comes to the folklore of literary or linguistic type.

Although folklore is not certainly a proper index of a particular culture but it does tell us about beliefs, rituals, conviction etc. of a community. There are scholars who maintain that folklore in general, and folk-sayings in particular, are the outgrowth of the mind of the people. They are created by the group and not by an individual. Hence, it is known as group-products. Though all folk-sayings have in common the quality of popularity and mass appeal, probably few were conceived by the masses. The very popularity of the observations expressed in proverbs, *chharas* etc. give testimony to the fact that it was originated by a gifted observer of nature and society which afterwards reflected upon a profound mind and given expression by a witty tongue, even though, the creator remained anonymous. Then, it comes to masses who hear and adopt them in the way they like. Again it takes a new form when it comes into contact with the new environment and social condition. In this way, it creates and recreates through creative processes. The change of words and padding is thus a continuous process. But in every case the original theme remain the same as before, but in every time when it takes a new form the word changes. Thus, it is assumed that those forms were created by one at first which have modified and recreated by the group or groups and thus have achieved a popular form. It speaks of the people and for the people.

The folk-saying is one of the earliest, if not the very earliest forms of literature ;[129] and it is widely recognised as one of the most effective vehicles for mass-communications. It portrays the most ancient idea. This is why the study of Indian women as portrayed in her folklore deserve attention. It speaks about the position and status of women from the earliest time.

129. Gaer, Joseph. op. cit.

The collection of folklore in the literature of living is vast. Most of the sayings, proverbs, riddles, and the types are concerned with universal observation. But though preoccupied with basic and universal problems, the approach to them and to their solution differs. The difference in form often expresses significant differences of approach. In all, in folklore we find peace is praised, and war or troublesome affairs are condemned. We will see, in this study, that a peaceful and a happy home depends on the womenfolk of a nation. So it is said *grihini grihamuchyate*[130] which means the housewife makes the house better. Therefore, if she is lovely, and dutiful, she is given an honoured position when a quarrelsome and whimsical woman is heckled and given lower status. The wicked-natured ladies are often punished, the virtuous minded are glorified. Good deeds held in high esteem, chastity is considered as the greatest quality that a woman can posses, charity is highly received in one hand and on the other theft, lying and covetousness etc. are condemned.

Women are first educator of human race and whether they say yes or no, they are happy to have been asked for. Further, it is by the work the women have bridged the distance that separated them from men. All these are discussed in this study with illustrations since examples are better than precept. There are a number of basic concepts on which different folklorists hold different views.

The present study bears such facts that will enlarge our knowledge about the womenfolk of India who have their own peculiarities and characteristics. The approach of this modest study is rational. It is an attempt to analyse and explain the position of Indian women, keeping in view the social structure of Indian society, its unifying principles and others. That the Indian women are the same as any other women of the world, they have the same passions, love and fears, the same devotion to the home, to husbands and children ; the same faults and the same virtues[131] are very beautifully pictured in folklore. Their life is interesting and they cherish those moral and social qualities that distinguish them from their counterparts in western countries.

The position of women and recognition to complete equality may largely be known from growing literature and orthodox religion. It is understandable, therefore, language and religion powerfully expresses the position and character of women. However sophisticated a woman be, she is not very well versed in her own scriptures in India

130. গৃহিনী গৃহমুচ্যতে

131. Elwin, Verrier "Tribal Women of India", *Women of India*, Publication Dvn., Delhi, 1958.

in general, and she often partakes in gatherings and religious ceremonies which gives her inward strength and stability.[132]

Where the unity of mankind is based on religious unity there lies the idea of co-existence. Co-existence between folk society and urban society and between secular functions and communal functions, between men and women in meetings and gatherings are very common to see. There is little feelings of castes and community in folk gatherings. Here everybody is equal and the womenfolk take care of everybody equally. Thus they are powerful enough to bridge the gap of difference in so many things of life. They also can cement up the conflicts between different groups. This is why they are said as the strength of men, they are the *sakti*, the spirit, the guiding force. All these are very well represented in India's languages, dialects and religions. It requires a special mention that the language and religion are the two most powerful weapons of human society and a human society is inconceivable without a woman. If she has no language or religion she has no place in the human society. But from the earliest days in the history of mankind, womenfolk have a special environment of their own, they have their own language and dialects which they preserve faithfully. Some of the characteristic idioms are found in woman's world alone and by studying them one will find that inspite of very great diversity their is more unity.

In early days, those who occupied lower positions in a stratified society did not feel the urge to raise in revolt against inequality in India which is a peculiar aspect of social life of the country as a whole. This made a strong impact on the cultural development of the land. There was a feeling in the Brahmanic period that the people of the upper castes were born to rule the people of the lower castes. Then came Muslim culture with foreign elements along with. The Muslim culture could not attract the general masses of India because the catholicity of Hinduism was more attractive than monotheism of Islam. But certain lower caste people were converted to Islam for two reason. Firstly, they wanted to get rid of the torture they had from the upper caste Hindus and secondly, being converted into Islam they used to get better employments and other openings with the patronage of the throne. In addition, a few upper caste family who wanted more and more favour from the Nawabs had maintained their relations with the Muslims, their Mollas and Maulavis. This has generated a new society who might be known as aristocrats. They had little feelings for

132. Nanavutty, Piloo "The Influence of Religion" in *Women of India*, Publication Division, Delhi, 1958.

their unsophisticated brethern and the traditional ideas. Then came Christian ideas along with the British. Bengal's cultural development took a new turn after her contact with the West. It went on through change after change. A further change is observed these days due to industrialisation, scientific achievements and the partition of the country.

The universal socio-cultural process—eating, drinking, sleeping, mating, procreating, recreating, fighting, loving, dressing, hair beautifying went on simultaneously with struggle for existence. But specific form of human behaviour, how to talk better and to wear decent clothes, etc. are conditioned by cultural framework within which a given person or a group operates. Man's behaviour is not transmitted biologically ; it is conditioned by accumulated culture of the past and the voice of his contemporaries.[133] Communication is the key word in human behaviour. Language, the tool of communication, sets men off from the non-human creation. Man was never born in a vacuum. He was born within a group, surrounded by fellow human beings, and by culture as well as by nature. Within his cultural *milieu* he was called upon to solve his problems to survive and to prosper. Gradually, his mental horizon extended, material problems multiplied and cultural legacy numbered. Man is the only creature that builds culture.[134] In the process of evolving culture. it is man who gradually climbs to higher plans of living. Man live in group and the language is the product of group. Group is the "career" of culture. An individual may be said to be the "bearer" of culture in so far as he is related to the particular culture-group and enclosing the values and ways of that particular group. As soon as he ignores the rules and laws of the group he comes to the revolutionary group which is responsible for the cultural and intellectual revolutions. From this there developed "thinking". Thinking soon became a most useful and responding item to the objective condition of life. Observation, communication and the establishment of correspondences have gradually been established with man to man in the process of thinking. Oral and written creations are equally important products of thinking.[135]

133. Bharat Sevashram Sangha, *Ideals of Indian Education and Culture*, Acharya Swami Pranavananda Memorial Volume, Calcutta, Samvat 2019.

134. For a detail study of Culture and its anthropological meaning a reader may be interested to piece *The Concept of Culture* in the book *Every Man His Way* : Readings in Cultural Anthropology, edited by Alan Dundes, Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, U. S. A., 1968 where besides the introductory note of the editor the following articles "An Outline of Cultural Materials" by George Peter Musdock "The Science of Custom" by Ruth Benedict and "The Concept of Culture" by Clyde K. and William H. Kelly are included. They are useful readings.

135. Majumdar, H. T. op. cit.

It has been estimated by F. Brandel that "Humanity has been striving to become one only since the latter part of the fifteenth century". But, unfortunately, "we find that in presentday India it is instead of becoming one, getting bifurcated and divided for political, cultural, linguistic etc. reasons. India's unity in diversity should not be a mere passing remark, we must learn to live together and to grow together. How this idea of living together can be had from the oral traditional materials is a point.

A hoast of scholars endeavoured to draw pictures of men and women of India as they are available in the ancient and written literature, archaeological objects and different other items that have been excavated and preserved and are coming out from new explorations and researches. But to our knowledge, there are only two systematic studies to depict the picture of women through oral traditional materials.[136] We have tried to deal with womenfolk here when in a next and in a seperate study one may deal with the menfolk of the country in a similar or in a better design.

Women are generally conservative and are the only prop of the house. According to the ancient idea, a wife in home has an honoured place as mistress of the household and she took part with her husband in his religious ceremonies. She is considered as *sakti*, the creative force of the man and the universe.[137] Indians regard women not merely as partners but as mothers. Motherhood is the highest fulfillment of India's womanhood. So there is a folk-saying, a son may be bad but the mother never (*ku putra yadio hai ku mata kakhano nai*[138]). A Hindu considers the mother and the motherland superior to heaven itself (*janani janmabhumischa swargadapi gariyashi*[139]). This speaks that in traditional ideas women in general wielded considerable influence and prestige in Indian society. But owing to foreign invasions and other complications of life the old order had undergone changes and the conflicts followed. As an outcome of internal wars and the misinterpretation of customs and religious sanctions, the condition of women in India was at its lowest ebb during the British period particularly during the nineteenth century. Due to the upheavels brought by

136. The following books provide the images of womenfolk from folklore: (1) *Women in Indian Folklore*: A Linguistic and Religious Study, Ed. with an Introd. by Sankar Sen Gupta, Calcutta, Indian Publications, 1969 and (2) Folklore of *Women*, by T. F. Thiselton-Dyer, Singing Tree Press, 1968.

137. Swami Benananda "Hindu Narir Adarsha-o-Sadhana", Calcutta.

138. কুপুত্র যদিও হয়, কুমাতা কখনো নয়।
(সং কুপুত্রাঃ কুত্রচিৎ সন্তি ন কদাপি কুমাতরঃ)

139. জননী জন্মভুমিশ্চ স্বর্গাদপি গরীয়সী।

the political forces and foreign dominations women suffered the most which are illustrated here with examples. The lowered position of women are strongly rooted. This is evident in folk-sayings and the like materials. Side by side one can see her higher status and position also in the society if he studies folklore properly. The following one is an example, which supports her lower position— a woman's advice upsets everything" (*stribuddhi pralyankari*[140]). Then it is said *Ardho ha ba esha atmana yajjayeti*[141], a wife is the half of the body of a man and *yabanna bindate jayam tabatardho bhabet puman,*[142] as long as a man does not get a wife, he remins half so long. Thus it is said again without a wife a home is a desert. As weal and woe come by turns on the wheel of fortune moves. So the position and status of women varies.[143] It is now taking a new shape according to the demand of the time.

Without any bias it can be said that the British historians and scholars propagated very efficiently that the Hindu women are treated like slaves by their husbands and other elders. It is not a fact and certainly a propaganda for ultereior motive which one can deduce from a careful study of the administrative policy of the British. Of course it is not our intention to say that the position of women in the Hindu period was very bright. Everybody knows that it got decayed from Vedic period to different periods such as Vedic to Buddhist, Buddhist to Hindu, Hindu to Muslim, Muslim to Christian period and especially in the eighteenth-nineteenth century it got worsed. But it should also be remembered that the position and status of women of other parts of the world during the time when our women suffered the most was no better. It is the British who wanted to cripple the womenfolk of India to make the nation lifeless. According to Hindu conception, it is the women who are known as *ardhangini* or half body of man, they are the spreed, the force, the *sakti* of man. If this *sakti* or force be inactive, the entire nation will be so. Thus the administrative machinery along with the scholarly persons went on propagating against the Hindus, their castes and communities, customs and traditions, their women, their illiteracy by which they were able to impose so many restrictions to people and to the Hindu women. Undoubtedly in doing so they did some good too for the people such as the ban of *sati*, intro-

140. স্ত্রী বুদ্ধিঃ প্রলয়ঙ্করী again it is said স্ত্রীরত্নং দুষ্কুলাদপি। পরম্পরা পরম্পর শুনি এই সূত্র। স্ত্রী ভাগ্যে ধন, পুরুষের ভাগ্যে পুত্র—(ভারতচন্দ্র)

141. অর্ধ হ বা এষ আত্মনো যজ্জায়েতী, শতপথ ৫. ২. ৩. ১০.

142. যাবন্ন বিন্দতে জায়াং তাবদর্ধো ভবেন পুমান, ব্যাসসংহিতা ২·১৪

143. Chattopadhyay, Kamaladevi, "The struggle for freedom" *in* Women of India, Publication Division, Delhi, 1958.

duction of widow re-marriage, spread of English education etc. While spreading English education they completely ignored native education as primitive one which had a devastating effect on the native people. A new aristocrat society sprang up by their partronization who according to Dwijendralal Roy[144] were eveready to imitate all that the *sahib* used to do. This had an adverse effect on a good number of native people who for their personal gain helped the then administrators to make the people lifeless.

It is well-known that the customary living habit of the people of India presumably played an important role in restraining to the standard of living It may now be possible to treat the nature of change that affect life and living. One should bear in mind that we are doubtless aware of the fact that we are not treading on a virgin field. We are conscious of wide variations of our women and society. The attribute of social organisations referred only to the community, religious, caste afflictions of folk and tribal people. Among the folk people there are number of "higher caste Hindus" (Brahmins, Vaidyas, Kaysthas and others from whom Brahmins take water or consider as equal rank), "middle caste Hindus" (from whom Brahmins take water but do not consider as equal in rank) "lower caste Hindu's" (from whom Brahmins do not take water). These castes are generally classified by the anthropologists as *Jalchal* and *Jalachal* castes. We have also included materials from other functional and non-functional groups. By the word 'functional' we mean the people who have traditional occupation. It will also help to make a comparative study about the position and status of the sophisticated and unsophisticated women.

Change is the one constant fact in the Universe. Some changes in nature are cyclical or form definite patterns of uniformity—day and night, the seasons following in a regular sequences etc. In this process of social evolution and changes men and women of India have developed multipurpose programmes which touch life at many points—social, educational, cultural, economic and political—with their widening range of activities. These organisations offer a splendid chance of leadership to womenfolk and the past hundred years may rightly be called as the age of woman's awakening.[145] The attitude towards women as individuals and members of community, which developed due to blows of constant invasions, was drastically revised in this period. It yielded a more rational appraisal of their rightful place in

144. আমরা বিলিতি ধরণে হাসি, আমরা ফরাসি ধরণে কাসি, আমরা পা ফাঁক করে সিগারেট খেতে বড্ডই ভালবাসি ॥ 'বিলাত ফের্তা' হাসির গান : দ্বিজেন্দ্রলাল রায়।

145. Publication Division : *Women of India*, Delhi, 1958.

the family and society.[146]

Sometimes change leads to philosophical outlook as was done in the case of Indian womanhood in the current century. Social change and cultural change are inextricably linked together, each affecting the other. Yet Indian women cherish moral and social qualities with their feet on native soil, and pride in heritage they are adjusting themselves with the modern living. This has a significant effect on the social change in India.

Profound as this change it is affecting as it does in social relationships and attitudes, the impact of this change, in terms of its chain reactions, has even more profound on Indian Society. In India, a woman has supreme power. The children training is particularly taken over by the mother at home. Even though, it is difficult to draw a perfect picture of a woman about whom *deba na jananti kutah manushya*[147] which means it passes all understanding human or divine.

In general, folk societies show a marked tendency toward maintaining the status quo, toward registering little change. Usually material culture changes more rapidly than non-material culture because of the vast number of inventions possible in that field. Non-material culture also resists change, and when it changes it changes very slowly ; social organization, patterns of social relationship and norms strive for continuity and stability. Be that as it may, the uneven rate of changes in a material and non-material parts of culture constitutes a cultural lag, it ultimately creates social problems. From these social problems many conflicts have arisen. How it operates in folk society will be discussed here taking folklore of women as model.

Women in general

Women along with men, from time immemorial, has formed an integral part of social structure. Her role in the various walks of life has contributed to the evolution of values which have counted for, what may be described, all round progress. Her status is the measuring yard of assessing the standard of culture of any age.[148] While the older tradition of high respect for them continued in a society, there were no doubt, some people who looked upon them and denounced them as the root cause of the ruin of men. So even the saints of India are

146. ibid.

147. দেবা ন জানন্তি কুতো মনুষ্যাঃ
(সং স্ত্রিয়াশ্চরিত্রং পুরুষস্য ভাগ্যং দেবা ন জানন্তি কুতো মনুষ্যাঃ)

148. Sen, Hannah "Our Own Times" *in* Women of India, Publication Dvn. Delhi, 1958.

of the opinion that the women and the riches are fit to be abandoned.

To have a vivid idea of the position of unsophisticated women of India it is necessary to have a brief survey of the roles played by them in different spheres of life. It is to be remembered here the womenfolk first discovered agriculture. Gradually, major agricultural operation and production works went to the menfolk. The weaker works are undertaken by the female agricultural workers even today. Then there are certain agricultural rites and rituals which are exclusive to women. In ancient days, menfolk were busy for hunting and grazing of cattle for means of subsistence. During this time it is the cattle which were their capital. They lived in groups. From groups the organisation of family and society arose and gradually towns and cities came into existence one after another. With the advent of the cities and towns, people were again divided into villagefolk and townsfolk—unsophisticated and sophisticated groups. However sophisticated may be, in the character of the womenfolk of the town there is an apparant tendency of being kind to all human being and nature like the unsophisticated village women. She is sympathetic to every creations of the world. This is not a show or an outward thing. She develops herself with that great quality where she receives the helping hand of the nature. This magnanimous attitudes of her makes her affectionate and loving. From this again, she attains softness, lovliness, and sweetness. This sweetness is like the light, it is a power which cannot be measured by the scale but if a woman does not get this mildnes, cannot be successful in her life., Thus she cannot inspire her counterparts. In the creative works of the man she is inspiration. The inexpressible mildness makes her beautiful by which she makes a man active. Without her inspiration generally a man is unable to do things in its right perspective, he cannot make a thing perfect. Thus it is said that in the courage of a hero, in the ability and efficiency of a worker, in the creations of an artist and such other perseverances, it is the inspiration of a woman that not only guide a man but also lead to the perfection of his creations.[149] Therefore it is she who is the source for accurate, just and beautiful works, it is she who makes the world gay and sprightly by her propitious touch, are beleived by the Indians. This is why the women are regarded as the great power in India who have two forms ; one form is motherhood. It is said that the hands that rocks the cradle rules the world.[150] The other is wifehood. She has a great

149. Tagor, Rabindranath, *Rabinda Rachanabali* vol. 13 Govt. of West Bengal Edn. Calcutta.

150. মাতাই জাতির ভাগ্য নিয়ন্ত্রী so মা নেই যার, না নেই তার, or
হাটে মাটে ঘুরে এলাম, ঘাটে নেই না (নৌকা)
বনে বনে ফিরে এলাম, ঘরে নেই মা and মায়ে নায়ে সমান ।

perseverance as a mother and this perseverance is not for a son but a good and dutiful son. It is not by quantity by which one can measure a dutiful son but he is known by the quality.[151] As a wife, she inspires his beloved to do all good things and help him to do things perfect, speedy, makes him active and efficient.

A women acquires this quality from her sweetness, from the loving spirit and beauty she owns. This sweetness and other qualities are her luxuries and the mildness and chastity tells of her character, but the status and position of women in the society and family varies according to time and age. The position of the women has never been dealt with all her intricacies. As a matter of fact, we cannot tell her status by treating her position as a daughter, as an youth, as a virgin, as a maiden, as a sister, as a sister-in-law, as a married woman, as a wife, as a co-wife, as a mother, as a mother-in-law, and so forth. In all these she has different roles to play and nobody has treated her with all the totality so far. It is to be noted that in her life time a woman functions simultaneously in different positions—she is a mother of one, a daughter of one, a sister of one, a wife of one, a sister-in-law of the other, a mother-in-law of the housewife, a grandmother so on and so forth. Again, a Indian woman has special roles viz. *nanad, bhabi, ja, thakurjhee,* widowed sister, sister-in-law, etc. Everybody have distinct roles either in the family or in the social, political or public life. A Hindu woman can thus be classified in the following table taking daughter as a base point :

TABLE I

Women in her life cycle

Daughter

Unmarried	Married
Sister, nanad, niece, sister-in-law, grand daugher etc.	Mother, step-mother, mother-in-law, grandmother, sister-in-law, (nanad), wife, co-wife, parent's aunt. sister-in-law may be wife's sisters, husband's brother's wife, and mother-in-law may be husband's parent's aunts etc. *Ja, bhaj,* bhasurjhee, thakurjhee, bonjhee etc.

151. ছেলে না হবার এক জ্বালা ছেলে হবার শতেক জ্বালা।
মূর্খ পুত্র নষ্ট স্ত্রী, তার চাইতে কষ্ট কি!
ছেলে নষ্ট হাটে, বউ নষ্ট ঘাটে।
মা জানে পুতের দরদ।

The kinship terms that are spoken by the Bengali women of different castes and groups may be given in the following table :

TABLE II

A few Bengali kinship term of the

Daughter-in-law

For men	*For women*
thakur, sasur, baba - father-in-law.	*thakurma dadi, nago* - grand mother.
talaimasai father-in-law of husband's brother or sister	*sasuri, thakuran, ma*—mother-in-law.
dadasasur—father-in-law's father, uncle, etc.	*thakur-jhee*—husband's sister.
mamasasur- husband's maternal grand-father.	*bhasur jhee*—husband's elder brother's dau ghter.
khursasur, jethasasur etc.—husband's uncle.	*deor-jhee*—daughter of husband's younger brother.
bat-thakur, bhasur—husband's elder brother.	*bon-jhee*—sister's daughter.
chot-thakur, devar—husband's younger bother.	*bhai-jhee*—brother's baughter.
thakurjamai, nandai — father-in-law's son-in-law.	*nanad*—husban's elder sister.
thakur-po—husband's younger brother.	*satin, satai*—co-wife.
deor-po —son of husband's younger brother.	*bhagni*—daughter of husband's sister, niece.
bhasur-po—husband's elder brother's son.	*bhagnebau*—wife of husband's sister's son (husband's nephew).
bhagina, bhagne—son of husband's sister.	*pisas*—husband's father's sister.
bar, khasam, bhatar, swami, pati swami etc—husband.	*didisasuri*—husband's parental grand-mother.
bon-po —sister's son.	*mamisauri*—husband's maternal grand-mother.
bhai-po -brother's son.	*ja, didi, chhoto ja*, etc. -wife of husband's brother.
saya—husband of a female friend.	*barki*—eldest daughter-in-law wife of husband's eldest brother.
behai, baibahik —father-in-law of a son or daughter, father of a sin-in-law or daughter-in-law.	*ajima*—maternal grand mother.
putro, put, chhele, pola, beta, chawal, khoka etc.—son.	*mayoima*—mother-in-law of husband's brother or sister.
pautra, nati etc.—grandson.	*natni, poutri*—grand daughter.
prapautra—great grandson.	*nat-bau*—wife of grand son
taimahasaya—husband's sister's father-in-law.	*prapautri* —great grant grand daughter.
mamu, mama, khalui etc. maternal uncle.	*pitamahi*—paternal grandmother.
kanin putra—son of anunmarried girl.	*abui ma*—mother-in-law of brother or sister.
satpola—son of a co-wife	*maya, kanya, tanaya, meyechele, jhee, biti, cheri, jhewari*- daughter.
bonai, bhagnipati—sister's husband.	*kaki, chachi, khurima, kakima, jethima, pisima, masima, khala* -aunt, wife of father's brothers, sisters and mother's sister.
kaka, kaku, chacha, khura etc. - parental uncle.	*putra-badhu, bau, bouma* etc.—daughter-in-law.
jamai, jamata, damad etc.—son-in-law. etc.	*baudi, bauthan*—wife of elder brother. or daughter's mother-in-law.
	sai, sayela - wife's girl friend.
	bhala-manusher jhi, bau etc.—daughter-in-law. etc.

All these speak of her different positions in the family.

The position of working women and non-working women differs considerably. Further, among the working-women there are different classes; women of the lower class—agricultural workers, industrial workers, daily workers, domestic servants; working women of the upper class—teachers, officers, executives, receptionists, steno-typists, clerks, telegraphists, telephone operators, etc. in addition to those who work in the upper level in the government and in the commerce—Prime Minister, Chief Minister, Governor, Ambassador, Directors of different companies, etc. Among the working women of all classes there are married women and unmarried women. This two class groups have different problems peculiar to their own. The problems of the married women are centered round her husband's family and her children while to how get herself married and settled in life is one of the greatest problems for an unmarried girl so to their parents.

There are instructions for all the different positions of her life as to how a woman should behave with others in the family, with relatives of parent's and husband's family[152] and friends in their life-cycle. The position of womenfolk varies along with the position and status of her parent's or husband's family. According to family structure and status the demands and needs of different classes of women are observed. As for example, a peasant woman is happy with a *sari*, woven in red

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152. গুরুষু ভৃত্যবর্গেষু নায়ক ভগিনীষু
তৎ পতিযু চ যর্থহিং প্রতিপত্তি। ॥ ৫ ॥
ভোজনে রুচিতমিদম অন্যৈ দ্বেষ্যমিদম্ পথ্যামিদম্
অপথ্যামিদম্ ইতি চ বিদ্যাৎ ত্যাগোপাদানার্থম ॥ ১৭ ॥
মহানসং সুগুপ্তং স্বাদ্ দর্শনীয়ং চ। ॥ ১৮ ॥
স্বস্য চ সারস্য পরেভ্যো।
হনাখ্যানিং ভর্তৃমন্ত্রিতস্য চ ॥ ৩০ ॥
দৈবসিকায়ব্যয়পিণ্ডীকরণম্
ইতি চ বিদ্যাৎ ॥ ৩১ ॥
নিত্য-নৈমিত্তিকেষু কর্মসুচিতে ব্যাঃ,
তদারব্ধানং চ কর্মনাং সমাপনে মতি। ৪৭। বাৎস্যায়নসূত্র
and again (বিবাহমঙ্গল, শ্রীবিধুশেখর ভট্ট চার্য)
উচিত বলিতে পারে গালি, পোয়ে ঝিয়ে হয় বেহালী (কলহ)
কান্না শুনিয়া (লোকের বিপদে) বাহির না হয়, নাচে গীতে যাইয়া যায়।
ভাল খায় আয় না বুঝে, বোল্ বলিতে উত্তর বুঝে।
ভাল বলিতে রোষ করে, তাহার স্বামী কেন থাকে ঘরে
রৌদ্রে রান্ধে কাঠে খড়ে, বর্ষাকালে চাল আঁচড়ে ॥
ওদা (ভিজা) হাতে কাড়ে লবণ, গুরু গেরাসে করে ভোজন।
এক বলিতে দু' বোল বলে, স্বামী শয্যা পায়ে টালে
অতিথি দেখলে কুপিত হয়, দাসদাসীকে প্রবল কয়
না বুঝে প্রাণের হাসি কান্না, সে গিন্নীর কেন ঘরকন্না!

thread, a looking glass, a comb etc.[153] when a woman of the upper class is always after modern amenities of life. Therefore to understand the position of Bengalee women it is always better to see them through class struggle. Innumerable materials are available in different genre of Indian folklore which are included in this paper. We should confess that this is not a very comprehensive study, it is an incomplete account, as any account of human society must always be. *(Continued)*

153: আয়না আনছি, চেরণ আনছি, (আর) আনছি লোলা ঝুমঝুমি
(আর) চুল বান্ধনের ফিতা আনছি, রাঙাহুতার কাপড় আনছি,
রসবতীর মালা নিবিনি ও আল্লাদি ! (লোকসঙ্গীত পূর্ববঙ্গ)

* * *

গিন্নী হয়ে রূপে ভোলে, স্বামীর পিঁড়ি পায়ে ঠেলে।
প্রভাত কালে নিদ্রা যায়, বাসি শয্যা সূর্য্য না পায়।
উদয়ে ছড়া, সাঁজে তাড়া, সে গিন্নির মুখ পোড়া।
চড়কা (ডুঁচু) পিড়ি চড়ক (খাট) ধুতি,
রান্ধে বাড়ে না লাগি কাতি (কাদা)।
স্বামীর সেবা, সাঁজেবাতি ডাক বলে লক্ষ্মীর স্মৃতি।
কাঁখে কলসী পানিক যায়, ঢেঁট মুণ্ডে কাকেও না চায়।
যেন যায় তেন আইসে, ডাক বলে গৃহিণী সে।
ঘরে স্বামী, বাহিরে বইসে, চারি পানে চার মুচকি হেসে।
হেন স্ত্রীরে যাহার বাস, তাহার কেন জীবনের আশ।

again রান্ধি বাড়ি যেবা নারী পুরুষের আগে খায়, ভরা কলসির জল তরাশে শুকায়।
এলায়ে মাথার কেশ ফিরে পাড়া পাড়া, লক্ষ্মী বলে সেই নারী যেন লক্ষ্মীছাড়া।

আর

again, বাইদ্যানীলো যদি যাবি আমার বাড়ী, কিন্যা দিমু জর্জেট শাড়ী।
আর দিমু জলে ভাসা সাবান লো, ও তোর নাকে দিমু নড়বড়ি ॥
বাইদ্যারে বাবুর লগে চইল্যা যামু, ট্যাহা পামু গয়না পামু।
আর পামু সোনার পুঁথির মালা রে, আমি চড়ব হাওয়ার গাড়ী রে ॥

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এক পয়সার মিঠাই কিন্যা পথে যাইলাম খাইয়া
বাড়ী আ ইলে পরে বউয়্যা কিলায় গায়ের গন্ধ পাইয়্যা। (বাংলার পল্লীগীতি ১৯৬৬) (Contd.)

All India Folklore Conference

To be held at Calcutta in December, 1969

under the auspices of the Indian Folklore Society

Kindly contact General Secretary at 3, British Indian Street, Calcutta-1 for details

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FIRST INTERNATIONAL FOLK FESTIVAL AND SCIENTIFIC CONGRESS AT BUCHAREST

Mankind today faces a crisis of global dimensions. Men of different races draw apart, emphasizing their differences, seemingly ignoring those things which belong to their peace and wholeness as a human family. Material levels also divide. Luxury among the have-nations contrast starkly with deprivation among many peoples of older civilization and ex-colonized areas. Everywhere, science proliferates gadgets, yet at the same time has serious consequences, eroding religion, questioning man's transcendental dimension, and threatening his future on the plant. Technology, seems to have run away into triviality of malevolence. Yet never was there a greater awareness of mankind's ills, never greater yearning, especially among the young, for a profound change in man's direction.

Accordingly, it was fitting that the First International Folk Festival and the Fifth International Folk Narrative Congress called at Bucharest by the State Committee of Culture and Art of Socialist Romania and the International Society for Folk Narrative Research from August 26 to September 6th and August 26 to August 31 respectively. The State Committee, it was announed, has decided to hold the Folk Festival again in 1972 and this will be a regular feature on every third year.

It should be emphasised that the traditional hospitality of the people of Romania is a guarantee for the success of such a function as the First International Folk Festival. Here a foreigner will be able to bask in the cool sea breeze or in exhilarating ozoniferous air of the heights, to relax in a pleasant landscape in Europe, and to visit picturesque towns. He will be able to see priceless historical monuments, works of folk and modern arts and many others. The country has a long-standing tradition, with a folk-art that has brought her fame all over the world. The open air museum at Tirgu Jiu which comprises some best known works of the great Romanian sculptor C. Brancusi or the peerless treasury in the North of Moldavia, the monasteries with interior and exterior frescos which due to their great artistic value have long since belonged to the patrimony in world culture. In the

festival more than 15 countries participated, who also sent their folk song and dance troups. Here delegates from India to Czechoslovakia, USSR to USA came, met and exchanged their ideas. It was a world forum which is a way to help respective governments to tighten their cultural and friendly ties.

The Festival and Congress do not change the world overnight; but assemblies of such type from accross the globe, as met in Bucharest from August 26 to Sept., 6, 1969, have the potentials so to do. No one could doubt organisers' aspiration for a better world, their hope and their vision. History will testify to their commitment.

Necessary to report that the Govt. of India wanted to send a troupe of folk song and dance, which ultimately did not materialise. However, it sent two workers of folklore—Mr. Sankar Sen Gupta and Dr. K. D. Upadhyaya who represented Govt. of India in the Festival and the Congress. The Indian delegates were assisted by Mr. Radu Surdulescu who served them as an interpreter from Romanian to English. Mr. Sankar Sen Gupta represented all the sessions of the Scientific Congress and the Folk Festival as the representative of the Govt. of attend to the Scientific Congress and Festival held from Sept. 1st India. Since Dr. Upadhayaya left Bucharest August 31 he could not to 6th. Mr. Sen Gupta was selected as a member of the Presidium in the afternoon session of the Scientific Congress on 2nd Sept., 1969. His interviews appeared in he News Bulletin and another interview was broadcasted by the Radio Romania.

In another interview, Mr. Sankar Sen Gupta, who, respects such effort said, mankind as a whole needed to be rehabilitated. New movements of folk level would free man from the civilization of things, not of persons, from the meaningless of preoccupation with money, and from the violence which characterized so many of the relations between man and man today. He who seeks the explanation for that remarkable phenomenon in life of nations called the International Folk Festival which has become a forum for all the nations. It is a thoughtful contribution to the Folklore Movement and Here one finds the roots of nations indissoluble, truly brotherly ties.

It is necessary to point out that the Folk Festival and Scientific Congress brought together the Indian delegates and delegates of folk-song and dance troupes of other countries like U.S.S.R. Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Hungary, France, England, East and West Germany, U.S.A. Italy, Poland, Mongolia, Tunisia, Lebanon etc. with the Organising Committee and people of Romania. Delegates were asked to discuss and analyse the issues raised by the scholars of the different countries on the aim, scope, methodology, and future of folklore research.

Dr. Stith Thompson (U. S. A.). Dr. Kurt Ranke President of the ISFNR, Dr. K. M. Briggs (Great Britain) Dr. A. Dundes (U. S. A.), Dr. R. M. Dorson (U. S. A.) Dr. W. Hand (U. S. A.), Dr. L. Honko (Sweeden), Dr. Y. Pino Saavedra, Dr. H. Wilsdrof (DDR) Dr. V. K. Sokolova (USSR), Dr. R. Niculescu (Romania) Dr. J. N. Ure (Ghana), Dr. J. Sabogal (Peru) Dr. D'Arcy Hayman, (UNESCO) Dr. W. F. H. Nicolasion (Scotland) Dr. Kiril Pennsiski (Yugoslavia), Dr. Michael Krones (Transylvania), Dr. Andru Klimov (USSR) Dr. Liliana Bogdanova (Bulgaria) Dr. G. Profeta, (Italy) Dr. R. Vulcanesca (Romania) Dr. Monette-Raymonde Riberrol (Paris) Mr. Sankar Sen Gupta (India) and many others were present. Dr. Hari S. Upadhyaya participated the Narrative Congress as a delegate from U.S.A. & Dr. K. D. Upadhyaya presided over a sectional meeting there due to the absence of the sectional President, Dr. G. Ortutay. It was a Congress of world order. The central aim for this, as declared by the Organising Committee, is to develop international understanding. Besides the Govt. of the Socialist Republic of Romania for their generous help and co-operation with the organisers, Prof. Dr. Mihai Pop. Chairman, Organising Committee, Dr. Ovidiu Papadima, Dr. Paul Petrescu, Dr. Vladustu and the workers, scholars and officials deserve thanks for organising such a neat, useful and timely Congress and Festival.



Prof. Dr. Doc. Mihai Pop, Chairman, Organising Committee (left) and Prof. Dr. Kurt Ranke, President elect.



Prof. Dr. Stith Thompson Mrs. Thompson and Prof. Dr. Wayland Hand, of Los Angels in Bucharest.



Prof Dr. R. M. Dorson, Director, Folklore Institute, Bloomington, Sankar Sen Gupta (Centre) and Prof. Dr. K. M. Briggs, Chairman, Folklore Society, London are discussing the problems of Indian folklore research at Bucharest



A view of the inaugural session of the Folk Narrative Congress. Indian delegates are seen among others

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THE INTERNATIONAL GAUDEAMUS COMPETITION for interpreters of contemporary music will be held from 1st to 6th April 1970 in Rotterdam in cooperation with the Rotterdam Arts Council.

The competition is open to vocalists and instrumentalists, not older than 35 years of age, to ensembles not exceeding 9 performers, which average age does not exceed 35 years.

The participants have to send in a programme with a total duration of at least 60 minutes, which has to meet the following conditions :

(a) all works must have been composed after 1920 ;

(b) at least two works must have been composed after 1950 ;

(c) at least two works must have been composed by Dutch composers.

Five prizes will be awarded. THE 1st PRIZE AMOUNTS TO 3000 DUTCH GUILDERS.

THE INTERNATIONAL GAUDEAMUS COMPOSERS' COMPE-

TITION will be organiser on the occasion of the annual International Gaudeamus Music Week and will include :

an international competition for choir—, chambermusic—, orchestra—and electronic works.

Composers, born after January 1st 1934 can participate. Entries, which must be sent in under pseudonym, are acceptable until JANUARY 31st 1970.

The International Gaudeamus Music Week will take place from 9-18 September 1970.

GILBERT AMY will be the leader of the analysis course, which will be held during the International Gaudeamus Music Week.

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All India Folklore Conference under the auspices of the Indian Folklore Society will be held in Calcutta in December next. Interested persons are requested kindly to contact the General Secretary of the Indian Folklore Society, 3 British Indian Street, Calcutta-1 (India(for details. (Press Note).

JUST PUBLISHED

Agricultural Labourers in India a study in the history of their growth and economic condition by Dr. Kamal Kumar Ghosh, Univ. of Calcutta. Rs. 28.00

Occupational Mobility and Caste Structure in Bengal : study of Rural Market, by Dr. P. K. Bhowmick University of Calcutta. Rs. 15.00

Industrial Profile of the Calcutta Metropolitan District by Dr. Bireswar Banerjee & Prof. Debika Roy Rs. 28.50

Land and People of the Himalaya study of the day of the land and the people and their surroundings by Dr. S. C. Bose Gorakhpur University. Rs. 30.00

Studies in Museum and Muscology in India by Prof. D. P. Ghosh, Asutosh Museum of Indian Art, Calcutta, University Rs. 18.50

Indian Publications, Publishers & Book-sellers,
3, British Indian Street, Calcutta-1

BOOK-REVIEW

SRIHATTER LOK-SANGEET (In Bengali, Folksongs of Shylet Ed. by Gurusaday Dutt, ICS, Dr. Nirmalendu Bhowmick, University of Calcutta, Demy, 228+447, 1966. Rs. 15.00

The volume is a selection of 380 songs from 423 songs collected by late G. S. Dutt from his native district, Srihatta (Shylet, now East Pakistan). The manuscripts of the songs were deposited to the University of Calcutta by Mr. Dutt for publication on 3rd Sept. 1969 with a forewording note where he wrote—"I have had them recorded in exactly the same dialect in which they are sung which I need hardly say, is the most important consideration in the genuineness of folk-song." He also wanted to contribute a suitable introduction to the book explaining the nature and scope of the collection but this he could not do because he died on the 25th June, 1941 and the University could take no decesion for its publication before his death. It is now presented to the reader as a posthumous piece after about 30 years where the reader is apt to imagine that the collector is no more; but as a matter of fact he is very much alive. The editor, Dr. Bhowmick explains how these songs are the tombstones and record of living institutions, which, emblamed in relative terminology.

The book has come to the light due to the encouragement of late Dr. S. B. Das Gupta, the then Ramtanu Lahiri Professor of the University of Calcutta, Nirmalendu Bhowmick, a research assistant for 1957 to 1960 under him, was entrusted to edit the songs collected by G. S. Dutt with a modern outlook and technique so that a contemporary reader be pleased to say that a right person has been selected for a right cause.

The book is divided into two parts. First part of the book is devoted to the introduction of 228 pages and it is as exhaustive as possible. It courageous scholars in many ways and does nothing to carry favour with the conventional : it suggests, for instance, that a regional monograph of the kind must contain such materials as that of the land, people, environment, the role of song in the life and living and so on. Pecularities and characterestics of songs and dialects which deeply rooted in hope for mankind have been considered here and that makes it a cause for gratitude. Besides the 380 songs collected by G. S. Dutt some more songs are also included in the appendix. All the songs are classified subjects-wise. Word notes of the songs are also given wherever possible. It is a commandable work for the new generation who needs to know of the great past of his country and people.

Dr. Bhowmick has tried his best to make the book authentic and intertsting not only by his lucid and vivid introduction but also by carefully edited text and faithful notes. The volume is bound to evoke interests amongst folklorists and others interested to the subject.

—SSG

EDITORIAL

BIRTH CENTENARY OF MAHATMA GANDHI

The modern concept of the Welfare State owes its origin to the application of Utilitarianism in the economic field. Applying 'the Greatest Happiness Principle', Bentham made 'Utility' the keystone of the arch of modern Welfare Economics. Matimisation of Happiness meant maximisation of Utility. This became the motive-force behind the welfare of the individual as also of the community and the State was to further his end. Any change which would increase Utility and Happiness, Bentham, would welcome as a good change and such change the Benthamite welfare-economist would accept as a change increasing the welfare of the community. Thus, Welfare Economics in the hands of the Utilitarians, became a branch of ethics, a field where the concept of the Good according to the Happiness-standard stood for ready application. In Mill's the idea of the Welfare State receives a complete and original treatment. It is coloured as much by his views of the Individual, the State and Society, as by his standard of the Good and liberal humanism. There is role of Economics in social science for increasing human welfare. In recent times, the utilitarian Welfare Economics has been developed. Welfare Economics is a normative, not an ethical study. Modern Welfare States are mainly following the directive and pattern of the State set for them long ago by the Utilitarians in the name of democratic economic planning.

The Welfare Economics in India has become a branch of ethics, a field where concept of the Good according to the Happiness-standard stood for ready application. Gandhiji's view of Welfare State is not simply the product of rigid application of the Utility doctrine to economics; it is the result of a wide review of the entire sociological field. He stressed more on the role of Economics as an applied social science for increasing human welfare than on its theoretics. On the eve of Gandhi Centenary in 1969 starts on October 2 not only we recall him and his theory but also people all over the world are paying homage to the great Son of India, who champinioned the cause of universal brotherhood of man and fought for truth, justice, peace and prosperity. Application of truth and non-violence of the achievement of social and political objectivities is Mahatma Gandh's distinctive contribution to

human affairs. His achievements were many, each one of which, judged by the greatness of its execution or in its results for human welfare would have made his name immortal anywhere in the world He brought freedom from foreign subjection to a faith of the human race. He freed millions of human beigns from the shakless of caste tyranny and social indignity. He laid the foundation for a new way of life which may one day well provide an effective alternative both a regimented and an acquisitive economy. Gandhi stands for a planned economy where individual enterprise is wedded to a system of liberal, democratic planning by the State with a view to augmenting the material welfare of the masses. He was essentially a moral force whose appeal is to the conscience of man and therefore universal. For this the year 1969 is being observed throughout the world as the Centenary Year of Mahatma Gandhi, apostle of non-violeice and father of the nation.

ALL INDIA FOLKLORE CONFERENCE

We are pleased indeed to know that An All India Folklore Conference would be held in Calcutta in December next after 1964 under the auspices of the Indian Folklore Society. The ensuing conference will be divided, as far as we know, into some sectional meetings. The general and this sectional congress will be devoted to folksongs, etc, folk & tribal literature. etc. and folk arts & crafts etc. where delegates and members must, we hope, think of utilising the tremendous store of regional collections for inculcating the fundamental human values of courages, of loyalty, of truth and tolerance.

Usually people dare not act for themselves or think for themselves but follow others, and what is much more to be deplored, follow outworn slogans and dogmas, which now have lost their validity. So it is nobody acts for or by himself. One becomes a divided and disintegrated personality. The result, we see all around in the form of regional, linguistic, communal and other group rivalries and conflicts. In this context, we welcome All India Folklore Conference for taking some definite and active steps to counter the potential danger rivalries and conflicts. Prompt and positive steps must be taken to make the people realise the stark reality that thecountry is one indivisible and folklorists have great roles to play to educate people to that way so the forthcoming conference.

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FOLKLORE

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HARI S. UPADHYAYA

STUDIES IN THE PHILIPPINE FOLKTALES AND THEIR INDIN VERSIONS

Perhaps the history of tale composition in India starts from the *Rigveda*, the oldest available literature of India. In *Rigveda* the Bramhanns are compared to croaking frogs. The *Upanishads* have preserved some animal tales in which animals are mentioned advising men. There are also characters that represent half-animal half human being. The *Mahabharata* is a great store-house of tale inside tales in which the wars of Kuras and Pandavas are the content of the epic. The Buddhists tried to establish relationship between man and animal. They choose by relating beast stories to illustrate the deeds and greatness of the Buddha in his former birth. The *Jataka* tales which numberred not less than five hundred fifty contain didactic fables—illustrating the wisdom of the Buddha in his previous life. The contributions of the *Jataka Mala* in his history of Indian folktale is very significant. Mostly these tales went to China, Japan, Indonesia, Philippine and Southeast Asian countries with Buddhist monks and traders. *Nitisastra, Arthashastra*, and *Dharmshastra* have preserved valuable tales pertaining to morality and everyday life. Here is a study by Dr. Hari S. Ppadhyaya on Philippine Folktales with their Indian paralles. Dr. Upadhyaya is well-known to our readers as a young energetic scholar who has got advanced traininfi in folklore study in the States.

The *Panchatantra*, composed with intention to instruct the naughty princes of a king, is the most important book of Indian fables. It has greatly influenced the folktale literature of the East and West. There are several texts of this work but the Pahlavi text seems to be composed before 570 A. D. The *Hitopadesh* was composed by Narayan Pandit who

flourished in the 14th century A. D. The purpose of this work is to instruct the royal princess in the art of politics, morality, and worldly wisdom. The *Brihatkatha* is composed by Gunadhya, the court poet of the king Hala. Several scholars are of opinion that this voluminous composition is of the first century A. D., which was originally composed in *Paishachi* language. *Brihatkatha Manjari* is the product of the versatile genius Kshemendra, who abridged the entire story of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* in 7500 Slokas (Couplets) in 11th century A. D. This huge composition pertains bird and beast tales of various type. Somadeva, the ascribed writer of the *Katha Sarita Sagar* (Ocean of Story). was a Saiva Brahman of Kashmir. He wrote this immortal work between 1063 and 1081 A. D. in order to divert the troubted mind of the princess Suryamati. *Vaital Panchavinshatika,* a collection of twenty five folktales, was written by Shivadas. Shuka-Sapatati is a collection of seventy tales told by a parrot.[1]

II

Emphasizing the importance of the Philippine Archipelago, Fansler writes that from "the very nature of its geographical position and its political history" Philippine stands at the junction of East and West with its heterogeneous ethnic groups—Tagalog, Bagobo, Visayan, Igorot, Negrito, Pampangan, Zambal, Pangasinan, Ilocano, and Bicol.[2] It is ethnically connected with China, Japan Malayasia, and India. After the occupation of Philippine islands by Spaniards.

Many folktales which were current in Europe were brought by Spanish and Portuguese missionaries and tradesmen to this Archipelago. Fansler thinks that the Hindu beast tales of the Jataka might have circled the globe in their progress from East and thus have been introduced to the Filipino by the Spaniards and Portuguese.[3]

Indian culture and folklore travel to Southeast by two routes: First, Indian Buddhist monks went to Japan and Philippine via China; second, by sea route to Indonesian and Philippine. Buddhist influence on Philipine folktales appears to be much greater than Hindu influence. In the present paper thirteen Philipine folktales from Fansler's Filipino Popular Tales are presented with their Indian versions, to demonstrate the diffusion of Indian folktales in the Philippine islands.

PHILIPPINE TALE NO. 1

Juan and his Adventures:

Juan and his Adventures[4]: A poor old couple had three daughters. The old man used to sale leaves of a certain tree for their livelihood. Gradually he became a rich man and built a big palace. Once the old

man planned to chop off the tree and sell it. When he cut down the tree a miraculous snake came out of the roots and immediately demanded his three daughters. He came home and told everything to his wife and the daughters. After giving handerchiefs to their mother, the three daughters bid farewell. They reached near the chopped off tree and suddenly disappeared.

Within a year the old couple gave birth to a son and called him Juan. When he became eighteen years old, Juan set out in search of his sisters carrying their handerchiefs. Somehow the adventurous Juan could trick to get a magical cap, a pair of sandals and a key. With help of the magical objects he met his sisters and brothers-in-law, who pledged to offer assistance whenever Juan needed.

Juan on his way back met a king whose daughter was stolen away. With the help of his magical objects and the brother-in-law, he could secure the box with a bird and an egg which contained the life of the gaint who had stolen the princess. He killed the bird and free the princess along with other women from the gaint's dark prison. The king offered his kingdom to Juan and made him a king. Let us come to its Indian parellel.

INDIAN VERSIONS NO. 1

Mahavanija Jataka :

Mahavanija Jataka[5] refers to a similar tree motif tale, where some merchants of Savathi are described ; who lost their way into a jungle. They grew hungry and thirsty. The merchants saw a big banyan tree and thought they could get some water. One of the merchants cut a branch and got a great quantity of water. Another merchant cut the branch from the southern side of the tree and got many things to eat. When the merchants cut down the branches from the western and northern side got a beautiful woman and five hundred loaded carts. The greedy merchant, finally chopped of the tree whereupon a serjpent king came out and punished them all.

Even to the present day the banyan tree is an object of great veneration in different regions of India. It is regarded as an abode of different gods and goddesses. Women folk may worship this tree to get son, wealth, good husband, and prosperity etc. Besides Tulsi plant and Neem tree, banyan tree are the most sacred to the Hindus.*

In the *Dadhi Jataka*[6] one finds elements of magical objects motif of the Filipino "Juan and his Adventure" tale. The Jataka story refers to four Brahman brothers of Kashi who became hermits. After some time

* Interested readers may read "Tree Symbol Worship in India", ed. with an introd. by Sankar Sen Gupta. Calcutta, 1965.

the oldest of all ceased to live on the earth and was reborn as a *Sakha* (friend) As he was kind and generous he visited his brothers. He gave them a fire axe, a razor which produced fire ; a drum if played on one side, enemies would run away and if played on another side enemies would be befriended ; a milk bowl, if it is turned upside down a flooded river could be immediately produced or a river could be held in it. These magical objects proved great help to his brothers. But a man from Kashi (or Beneras, U. P.), who had a fictitious germ of a boar, came to the three brothers and bartered all their magical objects for the germ. He finally killed all the hermits with the axe and got back his germ. After coming back to Kashi, he forced the king to surrender his kingdom. The king did so because he was aware of the magical elements.

The tale elements of the Philipine tale (No. 1.) are not only found in the ancient Jataka stories but similar tale elements are available in the folktales of different parts of India. M. Stoke[7] has collected a tale wherein a hero meets four Fakirs (mendacants) whose teacher had died and he has left four objects behind him—a bed which can carry whoever sits on it and wheresoever he wishes to go ; a bag that gave it possessor as much as he wanted ; and a stick that could beat an enemy ; and a rope that could tie him.

A Bhojpuri folktale[8] represents the elements of greediness in the tale No. 1. A man had a hen which he used to lay and got golden egg daily. The greedy owner thought to kill the hen and sell all her golden eggs at one time and become rich. He killed the hen but found only one egg which shocked him and he died.

PHILIPPINE TALE NO. 2

Who is the Nearest Relative ?[9]

Who is the Nearest Relative ?[9]

Julian, the grandfather told his grandson, Antonio, the following tale and demanded its answer.

Grandfather said, there lived a young man. After completing his studies he was to become a priest. But according to tradition his ancestry was traced and his mother's brother was found an insurreto. The young man really wanted to become a priest, so he set out in search of his maternal uncle, Paulino. Antionio found him but did not come back home. After sometime his father went out to look for this young son but he too, did not return and stayed with his son. It so happened that a royal army captured them and they were ordered to be hanged soon. Josefa, when she came to know, approached the general of the army and requested him to set free her son, her husband, and the brother. The admiral general after her repeated requests asked Josefa to choose only one of her dearest relatives to be set free. She fell into perplexed con-

dition and did not know whom to choose.

The grandfather ended the story and asked the grandson, "tell whom will Josefa choose to be set free . After seven days Antonio came up with a solution and answered to Julian, "Grandfather, the woman will ask her brother to be freed, because she can marry again and have a husband and son, but when her parents are dead, she could not have a brother . Pleased with the woman the king set all three men free.

INDIAN VERSIONS NO. 2

Ucchanga Jataka[10] describes a story wherein three men have been described arrested by mistake on the charge of robbery and have been jailed. The wife of one of them goes to the king of Kosal, where the event had taken place, and she entreats to set free her relatives. The king asks her what relation each of the three is to her. She answers, "Lord, first one is my husband, second one is my brother and the third is my son." The king says to her, "I am pleased with you and I will give you one of your three relatives. , Which one do you choose ?" The woman answers, "Majesty, if I live I can get another husband and a son, but my parents are dead thus I can never have another brother."

Jataka story speaks of the period when it was possible for a woman to get another husband. However this is not true in the traditional India. Philippine Tale No. 2 might have taken this element when it was practiced in India.

PHILIPPINE TALE

The Monkey and the Turtle[11] **:**

A turtle had a very cunning and selfish monkey as his friend. Once it so happened that both started on a journey when monkey ran out of his provisions he tricked the turtle and got all of his eatables from him.

While the monkey and the turtle were travelling, a hunter all of a sudden caught the turtle. Monkey ridiculed the turtle. The hunter was a good man and he used to give him many things to eat. The monkey once passed by where the turtle lived and was enticed with turtle's pleasant life. He urged the turtle to let him be in his place. At first the turtle did not agree but at last he accepted monkey's proposition. The next morning when the hunter found a monkey in place of turtle, he shot it dead.

INDIAN VERSIONS

Kachapa Jataka :

Kacchapa Jatake[12] narrates a story how a monkey who insulted a

tortoise by thrusting his penis down the sleeping tortoise's throat and was punished.

Mahisa Jataka[13] tells a story of an impudent monkey who voids his excrement on a patient buffalo under a tree. The vile monkey is later destroyed when he plays the same trick on another bull.

Kapi Jataka[14] also narrates a story of a mischievous monkey who dropped his excrement first on the hand of a royal priest and afterwards in his mouth. This infuriated the priest so much so that he advised the king to kill all the monkeys of the royal garden and use their fat for preparing certain drugs.

Bad monkey tale types are also found in Tibet.[15] It is a tale which refers to the people who wanted to kill all the monkey but one of them escaped and set fire in the village. Such tales are prevalent in India.

PHILIPPINE TALE

The Greedy Crown[16]**:**

One day a crow found a piece of meat on the ground. While he was sitting on the branch of a tree, the crow saw a little bird carrying a dead rat. With intention of taking the dead rat away he asked the little bird twice to halt. But she did not listen to him. The enraged crow chashed the bird out but could not get her. Meantime a hawk flew to the branch and picked up the meat left by the crow. When the crow returned tired and exhausted he could not find the piece of meat left by his earlier.

A very similar theme is found in Culladhanuggaha Jataka[17] wherein an unfaithful wife is described cheated by her paramour: A Brahmin's son after mastering archery returns from Taxila with his wife. He meets many robbers in a forest. The Shrewd leader of the robber's gang takes no time in recognizing the great hero and abandons the idea of attacking him. The hero's wife falls in love with the leader and kills her husband. The chief of the robbers' takes her to a stream and strips off all her garments. She cries. Lord Indra sees her weeping on the bank of a river. He, along with two other friends, come down to rebuke and scold her. Indra transforms himself into a jackal and carries a piece of meat in his mouth. The jackal goes in the front of the wailing woman and tries to catch a fish. Meanwhile a bird comes and takes away his meat. The woman laughs at the jackal and says:

"O silly jackal, thou must wish
Though hadst not lost both flesh and fish.
Poor fool! Well mayst thou grieve to see
What comes of thy stupidity"!

Then the jackal replies :

"Another faults are plainly seen,
'Tis hard to see one's own, I ween.
Methinks thou too must count to cost
When spouse and lover both are lost.

This type of tale is also found in the *Panchatantra*.[18]

PHILIPPINE TALE

The Camanchile and the Passion[19] **:**

In a forest Camanchile lived spreading its branches in all directions. Near this tree there were many other trees which had beautiful flowers and fragrance which attracted travellers. The Camanchile had no fragrance thus no traveller came to it. Once the tree made a lamenting exclamation that nobody come to it. A vine by the name of "Passion" heard the exclamation and approached near it. The Passion politely begged its permission to grow on its branches so that many travellers would come. But soon the Passion proved fatal to its growth and finally killed the Camanchile.

INDIAN VERSION

Palasa Jataka[20] narrates a story of the similar type : A royal goose use to pass to-and-fro a big Judas tree and soon both developed a friendly relation. There was a young banyan tree. The royal goose forwarned the deity of the Judas tree of the imminent danger caused by banyan's growth. But the big Judas tree never cared, thinking itself tall and powerful. However the time came when the banyan tree spread all over and overshadowed the Judas tree and the deity of the tree had to move elsewhere.

PHILIPPINE TALE

The Monkey and the Dragon Flies[21] **:**

It was very hot when a fatigued dragon fly had sat on a branch of a tree, where the king of the monkey used to live. Her unwanted presence annoyed the monkey king and he threatened to destroy her. She went to her brother, the king of the dragon flies, and complained against the monkey king. Her brother wrote a letter to the king of the monkeys threatening to wage a war against him. Very soon both side met at the battle field. The powerful monkeys looked down upon flies at the beginning but when the war started flies sat down on the heads of the monkeys. In attempt to drive the flies away each monkey started

striking on the head of other monkeys and thus killed themselves and flies won the war.

INDIAN VERSIONS

The similar theme is found in *Latukika Jataka.*[22] Brahma Dutta ruled over Varanasi when Boddhistva was born as an elephant. He used to live in a forest commanding over eighty thousand elephants. In the same forest lived a quail with her young ones. Once the quail requested the king of the elephants, Boddhistva, and secured safety from him. But in the same forest a rough elephant used to live who unmindful of the quails strength, destroyed all of her children. The quail pledged to destroy him. She befriended a crow and urged him to pick out the eyes of the elephant. She went to the fly and the fly consented to lay eggs in the elephant's eyes. The frog agreed to create illusion of a pond around the blinded elephant. Once the arrogant elephant was going somewhere, the crow picked up his eyes, the fly laid her eggs in the cavity of his eyes and the frog started croaking from the top of the hill and the foothill. In search of water the elephant ran up and down the hill, he broke his legs and died.

There is a Bhojpuri folktale which portray the similar theme wherein an insignificant bird challenges a powerful opponent and with the help of her friends she eventually defeats her enemy.

PHILIPPINE TALES

Juan the Orphan[23]**:**

Juan parents died leaving behind nothing but a horse. Juan's uncle did not like the beautiful horse and secretly killed him. Poor Juan took horse's meat and gave it to a hungry man who gave him a bagful of money when he came home his uncle knew of the happening. He killed his own fifteen horses. But he did not get higher price on their meat as Juan had got. He grew angry and put the boy in a sack and threw him into the water. Juan somehow managed to come out and befollowed his uncle by throwing him into the water.

INDIAN VERSION

A tale of similar type is found among the Santal tribe by Bompas.[24] The tale is known as "Seven Tricks and Single Trick." Both were great friends. But Seven Tricks felt offended if someone told him that the Single Trick was cleverer than him. Once Seven Tricks was invited by Single Trick at dinner. At that time Single Trick began to beat his wife

with a club and turned her into a beautiful girl. The following night Seven Tricks came to Single Trick's home and stole the club. He, too, beat his wife severely but she did not become a beautiful girl.

Second time Seven Tricks came to see Single Trick and both went to a forest. Before leaving for the forest Single Trick asked his wife to keep a hare. In the forest when Single Trick saw a hare he let loose his coward dog and said to him to chase the hare directly to his home. After the arrival Seven Tricks found the hare already there. He stole the Single Trick's dog and tried to do the same thing, he could not get a hare in his home.

For the third time Seven Tricks visited Single Trick and both went for fishing. Single Trick, before leaving, asked his wife to keep an alive fish in a water pot. Both friends went to the bank of a river and Single Trick caught a fish and threw it on the ground with his fishing rod saying that it would reach his home by itself. After the arrival to his utter surprise the Seven Tricks found an alive fish there. He stole the fishing rod and tried to send fish at his home but could not do it.

PHILIPPINE TALE

How Suan Became Rich[25]**:**

Once Suan fell down on an old man and the man died. The son of the old man decided to sue Suan. Meanwhile Suan saw a barbekin having difficulty in getting his carabao out if the mire. He brought the carabao out but it lost the tail. The owner immediately sued him. Culprit was asked to present himself before the king. After hearing the case, the king gave right to the old man's son to jump on Suan from the bridge and asked the owner of the carabao to give his carabao to Suan until its tail comes out. Both paid a huge amount and went away.

Another Filipino story, "The King's Decision"[26] also depicts of a funny manner of judgment which upsets the persons wro sue Juan: Once Juan was very hungry and he smelt some food being cooked in the kitchen of a rich man and his hunger died. The rich man forced him to pay money and sued him in the law court. Juan ran away. He saw a horse, and rescued him from mud. But the horse lost the tail. The owner of the horse threatened to sue him. Again Juan ran away. He scared his host's wife, who due to fear had a miscarriage. When at the end Juan was arrèsted and brought in the court. The king ordered that Juan should have the horse until its tail comes out and the woman until she conceives. According to the king's judgment Juan got the hose and the woman.

INDIAN VERSIONS

Parker[27] has collected a similar folktale from Ceylon: There was a man who borrowed an elephant but the animaal died before it could be returned. The borrower offered payment on another elephant instead. But the owner would accept nothing but his own elephant alive. The clever borrower somehow managed the obdurate man to break a waterpot, and in return demanded his very waterpot unbroken. Unable to do anything else, the owner of the elephant cancelled each others debts and went away.

Such foolish judgement type tales are common in India. The *Ocean of the Story*[28] refers to a washerman's donkey who ate vegetables from the field fo a Brahman woman. The owner chased the donkey, who broke its leg. The washerman beat the Brahman woman who had a miscarriage. When the case went to the court the judge decided that washerman should make the Brahman woman pregnant and she should heal the donkey's leg.

PHILIPPINE TALE

Suan's Good Luck[29]:

Suan had an old mother. She always wanted to send her son to a school. But Suan, despite of going to the school, used to sit on a bransh of a tree and whenever his mother used to come back from the market with many purchases, he would watch them. The old woman was not able to see this. Suan after arrival at the home would tell the names of the pushed articles. His foretelling lost long. His mother got convinced that her son was a soothsayer. Once the daughter of a chieftain lost her ring and Suan could find it with help of soldier. Gradually the stupied Suan became a famous soothsayer.

INDIAN VERSIONS

This tale has its close structural resemblance with a Bhojpuri folktale which narrates how a foolish Brahman became, just by sheer chance, a reputed soothsayer: A Brahman used to live with his wife. Once the Brahman came from outside and hid himself to see what he was doing. Just after talking to his wife for a while he told his wife what she had cooked. The princess of the kingdom lost her ring. Since the Brahman had become a known soothsayer, he was summoned by the king and asked to find out the lost ring. Knowing his inability to do such a job and the fear of losing his head made the Brahman sad. However he asked the ruler to allow him a period of seven days for the discovery. Three nights passed but he could not find out anything. The king had a maid

named "Sleep". The maid heard the reputation of the Brahman and was fearful of being arrested. She went to the place on the fourth night where the soothsayer had stayed and bid herself. She heard the desperate voice of the Brahman who was trying to fall asleep and muttering, "O dear sleep come!" "O dear sleep come!" The maid thought that the soothsayer had already found out about her. She immeditely presented herself before the Brahman and handed over the princess's ring which she had stolen. The Brhman gave the ring to the king and was appointed as the royal astrologer.

Parker[30] presents a tale which speaks of a stupid soothsayer who after sometime came to receive royal patronage.

PHILIPPINE TALE

Juan Wearing a Monkey's Skin[31] :

An old couple had a son. The father wanted to put an end to his son's life, because he was born with monkey's skin on ; however his mother kept him secretly. When the monkey-son became young he left his parents and the country. After sometime Juan dreamt of a princess who had been kept on a mid-sea island. He informed the king about it. The king promised his daughter's hand in marriage to him if he could bring her to the palace.

Juan set out in the search of the island. He saw a bird in restless condition and freed it. Being grateful for Juan the bird wanted to serve him. It flew to the island and somehow got the magical ring and gave it to Juan. With the help of the magical ring he could secure the services of some witches who constructed a connecting bridge between the island and the mainland. Juan forced the princess to come with him. Though unwilling, she had to come to the palace. Due to certain reasons the royal couple refused to recognize thir daughter. Seeing a monkey as her permanent companion, the princess looked sad. Juan sensed it and thus changed himself into a handsome young man. Juan and princess came again to the palace and the king recognized them.

INDIAN VERSIONS

Bompas[32] had collected three such tales from the Santals about the marriage between monkey and a human girl.

A. "The Monkey Boy" :

A man who had six sons and two daughters, died living behind his pregnant wife. After some time his wife gave birth to a monkey child.

Despite continous protest by the villagers for abandoning the monkey child, the woman did not leave him. Thus she was forced to leave the village and live on the outskirt. The elder brothers of the monkey used to ridicule him. The monkey somehow got a fast running mare and defeated his brothers in race. After a few years he became rich and wanted to marry. Once he went on the bank of a river where many girls were taking bath nakedly. He picked up the garments of one of the girls and sat on the branch of the tree. The girl urged him to give back her clothes. But the monkey did not listen to her. At last she had to accept the monkey's offer and marry him.

B. "The Monkey and The Girl" [33]

In this tale a girl described marrying a Hannuman (a big monkey). But her angry relatives killed the monkey and waited to creamate him. The girl blinded her relatives and mounted on the funeral pyre and burned herself with Hannuman.

C. "The Monkey Husband"[34] **:**

A Hannuman stole the clothes of a girl. He sat on a tree, and consented to give the clothes back if one of them marries him. The girl's relatives did not want it but the powerful Hannuman could not be defeated by them. The girl had to marry the monkey. Both lived together for sometime but the wife secretly deserted the monkey and married a villager.

Philippine Tale

The Sun God and the Moon God[35] **:**

The Moon requested the Sun to devour the stars and the Sun readily accepted it. But afterwards the Moon decieved the Sun and hid herself. The Sun grew angry with the Moon and started chasing her. And still he does. Whenever the Sun comes near her, there is an eclipse. Even to the present day the Sun is cashing the Moon and devouring stars. That is why days and nights are there.

There are many such mythical stories prevalent in north-eastern and middle India. Mostly these type of tales are common among the Santals, the Mundas the Birhos and other tribes of India.

Philippine Tale

The Monkey and the Crocodile[36] **:**

A. A clever Monkey, in search of food, saw a fruit laden tree on the bank of a river. After eating the fruits he wanted to cross the

flood river. So he befriended a crocodile. The crocodile agreed to carry him to the other side of the bank. The monkey comfortably sat on his back. When the crocodile came in the mid-river, showed intention to eat monkey's liver and kindey. But the cunning monkey duped him by telling that his kidney and liver were on the tree. Both returned to the bank, the monkey jumped and ran away.

B. A cunning monkey wanted to cross a river, meanwhile he saw a crocodile and urged to carry him to the other side of the river. He told the crocodile that on the other side he could get many monkeys to eat. But when the monkey reached on the bank, duped the crocodile and ran away. Once crocodile lied down their motionless and got hold of the money but again he tricked and escaped.

INDIAN VERSIONS

Vanarind Jataka tells a story of the crocodile who lays on a rock to catch monkeys, and how the latter outwits the crocodile.[37]

Sumsumara Jataka[38] narrates the story of the Boddhisatva when he wa sborn in the shape of a monkey near the Himalayan mountain. On one of the turning points of the Ganges he lived with his fellow monkeys. There lived a crocodile. Once the wife of the crocodile wanted to eat heart of a monkey. The crocodile befriend with one of the monkeys and requested him to come to the other side of the river with him. The monkey agreed and sat on the crocodile's back to cross the river. When they reached in the deep water the crocodile threw the monkey to the water and told him that his wife wanted to eat his heart. The cunning monkey told the crocodile that he had left his heart near the tree and that he would like to fetch it. Both returned ashore and the monkey escaped.

A Bhojpuri tale from the northern India speaks of a crocodile who befriended a monkey and wanted to kill him because his wife longed to eat monkey's liver: Once upon a time there lived a monkey on the bank of the river Jamuna. There used to live a crocodile in the waters of Jamuna. Both the monkey and the crocodile become great friends. The crocodile asked the monkey to come with him to home and on the way told the monkey that his wife wanted to eat his heart. Monkey said "O dear friend. I forgot to bring my heart with me. It is on the blackberry tree". When both returned to pick up the heart of the monkey, the cunning monkey ran away.

There are a few tales with the above framework current in India in which a clever animal jackal has taken the place of the monkey. Rouse[39] had collected a tale pertaining to a jackal and tortoise: A jackal sees melons on the other side of the river and wants to have them.

Meanwhile he sees a tortoise. "How are you and your family, dear tortoise", asked the jackal. "I am all well, dear jackal," replied the tortoise. After some time the tortoise expressed his desire to marry. The jackal told him that many persons across the river had asked him to find a match for their daughters. Thereon the tortoise readily accepted his plan to go to the other side of the bank. He carried the jackal on his back. The cunning jackal after eating melons dressed up a dry tree and showed it to the tortoise telling him that she is his bride. But he told him, "as long as I am here she will not speak. Carry me to the other side of the river and come alone, then she will speak to you." The tortoise, after taking the jackal back to the other side came alone to meet the girl but he found that he was cheated. He pledge to avenge but the jackal duped him again and again.

In the Temple and Steel Collection a partridge is described inducing a crocodile to carry the jackal across the river and upset him. But the jackal pretends that he has left his "wife" behind him on the other side of the river and thus saves himself.[40]

The authors have collected another story wherein a jackal makes love to a crocodile and induces her, under the promise of marriae, to swim him across the stream as he wants to eat some fruits. After the jackal finishes eating the crocodile brings him back. The jackal grows colder. The crocodile plans to revenge. Once she catches the leg of the jackal, but the cunning jackal tells her that she has caught a root. The foolish crocodile leaves the leg and the jackal escapes. The crocodile goes to the jackal dens to kill him. She lies near the den as if she were dead. When the jackal sees her says, "the dead always wag their tails." The crocodile wags her tail and the jackal runs away.

Philippine Tale

With One Contavo Juan Marries a Princess[41] :

There was a poor gambler who lost all his wealth in cards and cock fighting. He left his village penniless and went to another village. There he bought a cake. He ate half of the cake and kept the rest, and slept. Meanwhile a chicken came there and ate the remaining cake. He awoke and caught the chicken and claimed it as his own because it had eaten his cake. The owner of the chicken tried hard to get it back but he failed. The poor man left the village and fell asleep near a barber's shop. The dog because it had eaten his chicken. He went to a third village where an iron bar fell on the dog and the dog died. Juan picked up the iron bar and carried it on the bank of a river while he was crossing the river the iron bar fell into the water. He claimed that area as his own. On the

bank he waited for three days. It so happened that there a princess came and bathed in the area and was claimed by Juan. He immediately caught the princess and claimed her as his own. The king has to marry the princess with Juan.

INDIAN VERSIONS

Cullaka Sethi Jataka refers to a similar tale, wherein a person standing with no greater capital than a dead mouse, is depicted succeding in making a huge fortune.[42]

M. Stoke's[43] tale is very similar to Pilipino folktale, there in a man is replaced by a mouse. A mouse struck with thorns went to a barber who cut his tail to cure him. But the mouse ran away with his razor and gave it to a grass cutter as a gift. But when it was broken, the mouse insisted on get it back. The grasscutter was unable to return his broken razor so the mouse ran away with his blanket. The mouse gave the blanket to a merchant and ran away with his sugarcanes and gave them to a sweet seller. He took some sweets and gave them to boys and roped all their cows and gave them to a king. After giving the cows he married the king's daughter. The mouse gave his bride to some jugglers. She was killed during performing magics. To punish the juggler he took away their tents, and other properties and settled down in a city. Due to luxurious living he became very fat. To lessen the fat the mouse asked a carpenter to cut some of his flesh. The carpenter cut his flesh, the mouse died.

Stoke's Mouse in Kingscote's[44] Collection of Tales has been transformed into a monkey who plays the same role as mentioned in the Stoke's tales : A monkey went to a barber to have throns taken out from his tail. But the barber cut his tail. The monkey takes away the barbar's razor. The monkey gives that razor to an old woman and takes pudding from her and exchanges for some other thing from a hungry tomtom.

Bompas'[45] and Bhojpuri tales are the same. The youngest of the six brothers made ten rupees who stated with an anna. Bhojpuri tales gives a vivid description how six princess were asked by the king to take equal amount of money and start business. Only the youngest son could do well and the rest of the sons failed to make out a fortune for themselves.

NOTES

1. Most of the material of this section has been taken from K. D. Upadhyaya's. "A General Survey of Indian Folktales," Published in *Internationaler Kongres der Volker Zahlungsforscher in Kiel Aud Kopenhagen* (Berlin, 1961), pp. 432-445.
2. *Ibid.*, preface, p. VII.
3. *Ibid.*, preface, p. VII.
4. Fansler, *Filipino popular Tales*, No. 18, p. 171.
5. E. B. Cowell, *The Jataka or Stories of the Buddha's Former Births*, Vol. IV, No. 493, p. 221 (Cambridge).

6. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, No. 186, p. 69.

7. M. Stoke, *Indian Fairy Tale* (Calcutta, 1879) p. 153-63.

8. Bhojpuri is a dialect Hindi spoken in Eastern Uttar Pradesh and Western Bihar, India.

9. Fansler, *Filipino Popular Tales*, No. 31, p. 257.

10. M. V. Fausboll, *Five Jatakas* (Copenhagen, Leipsic, London, MDCCLXI), No. 67.

11. Fansler, *Filipino Popular Tales*, No. 55C, p. 369.

12. Cowell, *Jataka's* or *Stories of the Buddha's Former Birth*, Vol. II, No. 273, p. 246.

13. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, No. 278, p. 262.

14. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, No. 404, p. 218.

15. W. R. S. Ralston, *Tibetan Tale*, No. XLII.

16. Fansler, *Filipino Popular Tales*, No. 61, p. 391.

17. Cowell, *Jataka*, or *Stories of the Buddha's Former Birth*, Vol. III, No. 374, p. 144148.

18. T. Benfey, *Pañtschatantra*, V. VIII, Cited by Fansletr, *Filipino Popular Tales*, No. 63, p. 394.

19. Fansler, *Filipino Popular Tales*, No. 63, p. 394.

20. Cowell, *Jataka*, or *Stories of the Buddha's Former Births*, Vol. III, No. 370, p. 137-138.

21. Fansler, *Filipino Popular Tales*, No. 57, p. 379.

22. Cowell, *Jataka*, or *Stories of the Buddha's Former Births*, Vol. III, No. 357, p. 115.

23. Fansler, *Filipino Popular Tales*, No. 20E, p. 192.

24. C. H. Bhompas, *Folklore of the Santal Paraganas*, (London, 1909 ?) No. 80, p. 242. See also, *Indian Antiquary*, 3 · 11f.

25. Fansler, *Filipino Popular Tales*, No. 5a, p. 35.

26. *Ibid.*, No. 5a, p. 35.

27. Mr. Parker, *Village Folktales of Ceylon*, 3rds (London, 1910-1911), Vol. III, No. 203, pp. 110-111.

28. Quoted by Fansler, pp. 40-41.

29. Fansler, *Philipino Popular Tales*, No. 1a, p. 1.

30. Parker, *Village Tales of Ceylon*, Vol. I, No. 23, pp. 179-185.

31. Fansler, *Filipino Popular Tales*, No. 19, p. 178.

32. Bompas, *Folklore of the Santal Parganas*, No. XV, pp. 56-600.

33. *Ibid.*, No. XXXII, pp. 128-129.

34. *Ibid.*, No. LXX, pp. 212-214.

35. Ruddf Rahmann, "Quarrels and Enmity Between the Sun and the Moon," (A contribution to the mythologies of the Philippine, Indian, and the Malaya Peninsula) *Folklore Studies*, Vol. XIV, pp. 202, 1955.

36. Fansler, *Flipino Popular Tales*, No. 56A, B, p. 374.

37. Cowell, *Jataka or Stories of the Buddha's Former Births*, Vol. I ,No. 57.

38. *Ibid*, Vol. II, No. 208, p. 110.

39. W. H. D. Rouse and W. Crooke, *The Talking Thrush*, (London, 1899), No. 20, p. 85.

40. R. C. Temple and F A. Steel, *Wide Awake Stories*, (Tales of the Punjab), (Bombay, 1884), No. XXI, p. 178 ; No. XXXI, p. 243.

See also, M. Frese, *Old Deccan Days* (London, 1889), "The Alligator and the Jackal", No. XXIV, p. 211.

Bompas, *Folklore of the Santal Parganas*, "The Jackal and the Leopards," No. CXXII, p. 340.

41. Fansler, *Filipino Popular Tales*, No. 32, p. 262.

42. Cowell, *Jataka or Stories of the Buddha's Former Births*, Vol. I, No. 4, pp. 14-20.

See also, Knatchbull, *Kalilah and Dimnah*, Chapter, XVIII, p. 358.

43. Stoke, *Indian Fairy Tales*, No. XVII, pp. 101-107.

See alslo, Temple and Steel, *Wide Awake Stories*, "The Rat's Wedding," No. 2, pp. 17-26.

Same Tale is published in the *Indian Antiquary*, XI, p. 226.

44. H. Kingscoe and N. Sastri, *Tales of the Sun*, No. XIV, p. 187.

See also, *The Talking Thrush*, No. 32, p. 132.

Bompas, *Folklore of the Santal Parganas*, No. XLIX, pp. 160-163.

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SANKAR SEN GUPTA

WOMEN IN ANCIENT LITERATURE AND FOLKLORE

(Continued from previous issue)

Ancient literatures are a reservoir of accumulated folk wisdom which serves the people as instruction and is known as an effective aid to the masses. How to do better things, how to live peacefully, how to avoid evil things, how to prevent pain and disaster are the teachings they learnt from the elders. All these find a necessary resort to a number of literary devices which is the starting point of the making of folklore everywhere.

The makers of folklore are conscious to the fact when teaching by direct method or by work rather than exemplary deed, they are in need of gaining the confidence in them by the listners and holding attention of whom they are meant for. This depends upon the topic which is to be presented folkways. Gradually it got its literary form—folk literature—which is the most aristocratic form among the different types of folklore. It has naturally tremendous influence on the folk people since it is a product of folk-stock. Once attention had gained and held, the "lesson" they wish to impress or the communications they want to pass on has to be formulated in such a way that the listners grasp folklore readily and firmly retain in their memory.[127] To succeed in their objectives, the creators of folklore related experiences of great importance to their audience, or, by their imaginative presentation, made the experiences appear of great importance. Sometimes these teachings were given simultaneously with joyous and joyful activities—through songs, dances, dramas etc. which comes to the action type of folklore.[128] The implications of the words of songs, *chharas*, proverbs, sayings, etc. had to be such that those who heard them would greatly benefit by remembering. Finally it was imperative for those who used only oral instruction to reduce the basic idea to a few words, which, by their sense and form, would captivate the imagination and remain secure in the memory.

127. See "definition of the word folklore" in SDFML, Funk & Wagnalls, U.S.A.

128. Sen Gupta, Sankar *A Survey of Folklore Study in Bengal:* West Bengal and East Pakistan, Indian Publications, Calcutta, 1967.

This pedagogic need gave rise quite early to a great variety of literary forms in which the fable, the allegory, the proverb, the riddle, the parable, the myth, etc. are part and parcel. All these are grouped with a single word "folklore" which is the accumulated knowledge of homogeneous people. These forms of folklore, in most cases, share the characteristic leading in the mind of the listners to inevitable conclusion. Actually, the conclusions are first, for most of the oral forms, especially in religious materials. There must have some aims for such instructions which often took the form of proverbs, sayings, or the kind folk literature that comes to the folklore of literary or linguistic type.

Although folklore is not certainly a proper index of a particular culture but it does tell us about beliefs, rituals, conviction etc. of a community. There are scholars who maintain that folklore in general, and folk-sayings in particular, are the outgrowth of the mind of the people. They are created by the group and not by an individual. Hence, it is known as group-products. Though all folk-sayings have in common the quality of popularity and mass appeal, probably few were conceived by the masses. The very popularity of the observations expressed in proverbs, *chharas* etc. give testimony to the fact that it was originated by a gifted observer of nature and society which afterwards reflected upon a profound mind and given expression by a witty tongue, even though, the creator remained anonymous. Then, it comes to masses who hear and adopt them in the way they like. Again it takes a new form when it comes into contact with the new environment and social condition. In this way, it creates and recreates through creative processes. The change of words and padding is thus a continuous process. But in every case the original theme remain the same as before, but in every time when it takes a new form the word changes. Thus, it is assumed that those forms were created by one at first which have modified and recreated by the group or groups and thus have achieved a popular form. It speaks of the people and for the people.

The folk-saying is one of the earliest, if not the very earliest forms of literature ;[129] and it is widely recognised as one of the most effective vehicles for mass-communications. It portrays the most ancient idea. This is why the study of Indian women as portrayed in her folklore deserve attention. It speaks about the position and status of women from the earliest time.

129. Gaer, Joseph. op. cit.

The collection of folklore in the literature of living is vast. Most of the sayings, proverbs, riddles, and the types are concerned with universal observation. But though preoccupied with basic and universal problems, the approach to them and to their solution differs. The difference in form often expresses significant differences of approach. In all, in folklore we find peace is praised, and war or troublesome affairs are condemned. We will see, in this study, that a peaceful and a happy home depends on the womenfolk of a nation. So it is said *grihini grihamuchyate*[130] which means the housewife makes the house better. Therefore, if she is lovely, and dutiful, she is given an honoured position when a quarrelsome and whimsical woman is heckled and given lower status. The wicked-natured ladies are often punished, the virtuous minded are glorified. Good deeds held in high esteem, chastity is considered as the greatest quality that a woman can posses, charity is highly received in one hand and on the other theft, lying and covetousness etc. are condemned.

Women are first educator of human race and whether they say yes or no, they are happy to have been asked for. Further, it is by the work the women have bridged the distance that separated them from men. All these are discussed in this study with illustrations since examples are better than precept. There are a number of basic concepts on which different folklorists hold different views.

The present study bears such facts that will enlarge our knowledge about the womenfolk of India who have their own peculiarities and characteristics. The approach of this modest study is rational. It is an attempt to analyse and explain the position of Indian women, keeping in view the social structure of Indian society, its unifying principles and others. That the Indian women are the same as any other women of the world, they have the same passions, love and fears, the same devotion to the home, to husbands and children ; the same faults and the same virtues[131] are very beautifully pictured in folklore. Their life is interesting and they cherish those moral and social qualities that distinguish them from their counterparts in western countries.

The position of women and recognition to complete equality may largely be known from growing literature and orthodox religion. It is understandable, therefore, language and religion powerfully expresses the position and character of women. However sophisticated a woman be, she is not very well versed in her own scriptures in India

130. গৃহিনী গৃহমুচ্যতে

131. Elwin, Verrier "Tribal Women of India", *Women of India*, Publication Dvn., Delhi, 1953.

in general, and she often partakes in gatherings and religious ceremonies which gives her inward strength and stability.[132]

Where the unity of mankind is based on religious unity there lies the idea of co-existence. Co-existence between folk society and urban society and between secular functions and communal functions, between men and women in meetings and gatherings are very common to see. There is little feelings of castes and community in folk gatherings. Here everybody is equal and the womenfolk take care of everybody equally. Thus they are powerful enough to bridge the gap of difference in so many things of life. They also can cement up the conflicts between different groups. This is why they are said as the strength of men, they are the *sakti*, the spirit, the guiding force. All these are very well represented in India's languages, dialects and religions. It requires a special mention that the language and religion are the two most powerful weapons of human society and a human society is inconceivable without a woman. If she has no language or religion she has no place in the human society. But from the earliest days in the history of mankind, womenfolk have a special environment of their own, they have their own language and dialects which they preserve faithfully. Some of the characteristic idioms are found in woman's world alone and by studying them one will find that inspite of very great diversity their is more unity.

In early days, those who occupied lower positions in a stratified society did not feel the urge to raise in revolt against inequality in India which is a peculiar aspect of social life of the country as a whole. This made a strong impact on the cultural development of the land. There was a feeling in the Brahmanic period that the people of the upper castes were born to rule the people of the lower castes. Then came Muslim culture with foreign elements along with. The Muslim culture could not attract the general masses of India because the catholicity of Hinduism was more attractive than monotheism of Islam. But certain lower caste people were converted to Islam for two reason. Firstly, they wanted to get rid of the torture they had from the upper caste Hindus and secondly, being converted into Islam they used to get better employments and other openings with the patronage of the throne. In addition, a few upper caste family who wanted more and more favour from the Nawabs had maintained their relations with the Muslims, their Mollas and Maulavis. This has generated a new society who might be known as aristocrats. They had little feelings for

132. Nanavutty, Piloo "The Influence of Religion" in *Women of India*, Publication Division, Delhi, 1958.

their unsophisticated brethern and the traditional ideas. Then came Christian ideas along with the British. Bengal's cultural development took a new turn after her contact with the West. It went on through change after change. A further change is observed these days due to industrialisation, scientific achievements and the partition of the country.

The universal socio-cultural process—eating, drinking, sleeping, mating, procreating, recreating, fighting, loving, dressing, hair beautifying went on simultaneously with struggle for existence. But specific form of human behaviour, how to talk better and to wear decent clothes, etc. are conditioned by cultural framework within which a given person or a group operates. Man's behaviour is not transmitted biologically ; it is conditioned by accumulated culture of the past and the voice of his contemporaries.[133] Communication is the key word in human behaviour. Language, the tool of communication, sets men off from the non-human creation. Man was never born in a vacuum. He was born within a group, surrounded by fellow human beings, and by culture as well as by nature. Within his cultural *milieu* he was called upon to solve his problems to survive and to prosper. Gradually, his mental horizon extended, material problems multiplied and cultural legacy numbered. Man is the only creature that builds culture.[134] In the process of evolving culture, it is man who gradually climbs to higher plans of living. Man live in group and the language is the product of group. Group is the "career" of culture. An individual may be said to be the "bearer" of culture in so far as he is related to the particular culture-group and enclosing the values and ways of that particular group. As soon as he ignores the rules and laws of the group he comes to the revolutionary group which is responsible for the cultural and intellectual revolutions. From this there developed "thinking". Thinking soon became a most useful and responding item to the objective condition of life. Observation, communication and the establishment of correspondences have gradually been established with man to man in the process of thinking. Oral and written creations are equally important products of thinking.[135]

133. Bharat Sevashram Sangha, *Ideals of Indian Education and Culture*, Acharya Swami Pranavananda Memorial Volume, Calcutta, Samvat 2019.

134. For a detail study of Culture and its anthropological meaning a reader may be interested to piece *The Concept of Culture* in the book *Every Man His Way* : Readings in Cultural Anthropology, edited by Alan Dundes, Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, U. S. A., 1968 where besides the introductory note of the editor the following articles "An Outline of Cultural Materials" by George Peter Musdock "The Science of Custom" by Ruth Benedict and "The Concept of Culture" by Clyde K. and William H. Kelly are included. They are useful readings.

135. Majumdar, H. T. op. cit.

It has been estimated by F. Brandel that "Humanity has been striving to become one only since the latter part of the fifteenth century". But, unfortunately, "we find that in presentday India it is instead of becoming one, getting bifurcated and divided for political, cultural, linguistic etc. reasons. India's unity in diversity should not be a mere passing remark, we must learn to live together and to grow together. How this idea of living together can be had from the oral traditional materials is a point.

A hoast of scholars endeavoured to draw pictures of men and women of India as they are available in the ancient and written literature, archaeological objects and different other items that have been excavated and preserved and are coming out from new explorations and researches. But to our knowledge, there are only two systematic studies to depict the picture of women through oral traditional materials.[136] We have tried to deal with womenfolk here when in a next and in a seperate study one may deal with the menfolk of the country in a similar or in a better design.

Women are generally conservative and are the only prop of the house. According to the ancient idea, a wife in home has an honoured place as mistress of the household and she took part with her husband in his religious ceremonies. She is considered as *sakti*, the creative force of the man and the universe.[137] Indians regard women not merely as partners but as mothers. Motherhood is the highest fulfillment of India's womanhood. So there is a folk-saying, a son may be bad but the mother never (*ku putra yadio hai ku mata kakhano nai*[138]). A Hindu considers the mother and the motherland superior to heaven itself (*janani janmabhumischa swargadapi gariyashi*[139]). This speaks that in traditional ideas women in general wielded considerable influence and prestige in Indian society. But owing to foreign invasions and other complications of life the old order had undergone changes and the conflicts followed. As an outcome of internal wars and the misinterpretation of customs and religious sanctions, the condition of women in India was at its lowest ebb during the British period particularly during the nineteenth century. Due to the upheavels brought by

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136. The following books provide the images of womenfolk from folklore: (1) *Women in Indian Folklore*: A Linguistic and Religious Study, Ed. with an Introd. by Sankar Sen Gupta, Calcutta, Indian Publications, 1969 and (2) Folklore of *Women*, by T. F. Thiselton-Dyer, Singing Tree Press, 1968.

137. Swami Benananda "Hindu Narir Adarsha-o-Sadhana", Calcutta.

138. কুপুত্র যদিও হয়, কুমাতা কখনো নয়।
(সং কুপুত্রাঃ কুত্রচিৎ সন্তি ন কদাপি কুমাতরঃ)

139. জননী জন্মভূমিশ্চ স্বর্গাদপি গরীয়সী।

the political forces and foreign dominations women suffered the most which are illustrated here with examples. The lowered position of women are strongly rooted. This is evident in folk-sayings and the like materials. Side by side one can see her higher status and position also in the society if he studies folklore properly. The following one is an example, which supports her lower position— a woman's advice upsets everything" (*stribuddhi pralyankari*[140]). Then it is said *Ardho ha ba esha atmana yajjayeti*[141], a wife is the half of the body of a man and *yabanna bindate jayam tabatardho bhabet puman,*[142] as long as a man does not get a wife, he remins half so long. Thus it is said again without a wife a home is a desert. As weal and woe come by turns on the wheel of fortune moves. So the position and status of women varies.[143] It is now taking a new shape according to the demand of the time.

Without any bias it can be said that the British historians and scholars propagated very efficiently that the Hindu women are treated like slaves by their husbands and other elders. It is not a fact and certainly a propaganda for ultereior motive which one can deduce from a careful study of the administrative policy of the British. Of course it is not our intention to say that the position of women in the Hindu period was very bright. Everybody knows that it got decayed from Vedic period to different periods such as Vedic to Buddhist, Buddhist to Hindu, Hindu to Muslim, Muslim to Christian period and especially in the eighteenth-nineteenth century it got worsed. But it should also be remembered that the position and status of women of other parts of the world during the time when our women suffered the most was no better. It is the British who wanted to cripple the womenfolk of India to make the nation lifeless. According to Hindu conception, it is the women who are known as *ardhangini* or half body of man, they are the spreed, the force, the *sakti* of man. If this *sakti* or force be inactive, the entire nation will be so. Thus the administrative machinery along with the scholarly persons went on propagating against the Hindus, their castes and communities, customs and traditions, their women, their illiteracy by which they were able to impose so many restrictions to people and to the Hindu women. Undoubtedly in doing so they did some good too for the people such as the ban of *sati,* intro-

140. স্ত্রী বুদ্ধিঃ প্রলয়ঙ্করী again it is said স্ত্রীরত্নং দুষ্কুলাদপি। পরম্পরা পরম্পর শুনি এই সূত্র। স্ত্রী ভাগ্যে ধন, পুরুষের ভাগ্যে পুত্র—(ভারতচন্দ্র)

141. অর্ধ হ বা এষ আত্মনো যজ্জায়েতী, শতপথ ৫. ২. ৩. ১০.

142. যাবন্ন বিন্দতে জায়াং তাবদর্ধো ভবেন পুমান, ব্যাসসংহিতা ২·১৪

143. Chattopadhyay, Kamaladevi, "The struggle for freedom" *in* Women of India, Publication Division, Delhi, 1958.

duction of widow re-marriage, spread of English education etc. While spreading English education they completely ignored native education as primitive one which had a devastating effect on the native people. A new aristocrat society sprang up by their partronization who according to Dwijendralal Roy[144] were eveready to imitate all that the *sahib* used to do. This had an adverse effect on a good number of native people who for their personal gain helped the then administrators to make the people lifeless.

It is well-known that the customary living habit of the people of India presumably played an important role in restraining to the standard of living It may now be possible to treat the nature of change that affect life and living. One should bear in mind that we are doubtless aware of the fact that we are not treading on a virgin field. We are conscious of wide variations of our women and society. The attribute of social organisations referred only to the community, religious, caste afflictions of folk and tribal people. Among the folk people there are number of "higher caste Hindus" (Brahmins, Vaidyas, Kaysthas and others from whom Brahmins take water or consider as equal rank), "middle caste Hindus" (from whom Brahmins take water but do not consider as equal in rank) "lower caste Hindu's" (from whom Brahmins do not take water). These castes are generally classified by the anthropologists as *Jalchal* and *Jalachal* castes. We have also included materials from other functional and non-functional groups. By the word 'functional' we mean the people who have traditional occupation. It will also help to make a comparative study about the position and status of the sophisticated and unsophisticated women.

Change is the one constant fact in the Universe. Some changes in nature are cyclical or form definite patterns of uniformity—day and night, the seasons following in a regular sequences etc. In this process of social evolution and changes men and women of India have developed multipurpose programmes which touch life at many points—social, educational, cultural, economic and political—with their widening range of activities. These organisations offer a splendid chance of leadership to womenfolk and the past hundred years may rightly be called as the age of woman's awakening.[145] The attitude towards women as individuals and members of community, which developed due to blows of constant invasions, was drastically revised in this period. It yielded a more rational appraisal of their rightful place in

144. আমরা বিলিতি ধরণে হাসি, আমরা ফরাসি ধরণে কাসি, আমরা পা ফাঁক করে সিগারেট খেতে বড্ডই ভালবাসি॥ 'বিলাত ফের্তা' হাসির গান : দ্বিজেন্দ্রলাল রায়।

145. Publication Division : *Women of India*, Delhi, 1958.

the family and society.[146]

Sometimes change leads to philosophical outlook as was done in the case of Indian womanhood in the current century. Social change and cultural change are inextricably linked together, each affecting the other. Yet Indian women cherish moral and social qualities with their feet on native soil, and pride in heritage they are adjusting themselves with the modern living. This has a significant effect on the social change in India.

Profound as this change it is affecting as it does in social relationships and attitudes, the impact of this change, in terms of its chain reactions, has even more profound on Indian Society. In India, a woman has supreme power. The children training is particularly taken over by the mother at home. Even though, it is difficult to draw a perfect picture of a woman about whom *deba na jananti kutah manushya*[147] which means it passes all understanding human or divine.

In general, folk societies show a marked tendency toward maintaining the status quo, toward registering little change. Usually material culture changes more rapidly than non-material culture because of the vast number of inventions possible in that field. Non-material culture also resists change, and when it changes it changes very slowly ; social organization, patterns of social relationship and norms strive for continuity and stability. Be that as it may, the uneven rate of changes in a material and non-material parts of culture constitutes a cultural lag, it ultimately creates social problems. From these social problems many conflicts have arisen. How it operates in folk society will be discussed here taking folklore of women as model.

Women in general

Women along with men, from time immemorial, has formed an integral part of social structure. Her role in the various walks of life has contributed to the evolution of values which have counted for, what may be described, all round progress. Her status is the measuring yard of assessing the standard of culture of any age.[148] While the older tradition of high respect for them continued in a society, there were no doubt, some people who looked upon them and denounced them as the root cause of the ruin of men. So even the saints of India are

146. ibid.

147. দেবা ন জানন্তি কুতো মনুষ্যাঃ
(সং স্ত্রিয়াশ্চরিত্রং পুরুষস্য ভাগ্যং দেবা ন জানন্তি কুতো মনুষ্যাঃ)

148. Sen, Hannah "Our Own Times" *in* Women of India, Publication Dvn. Delhi, 1958.

of the opinion that the women and the riches are fit to be abandoned.

To have a vivid idea of the position of unsophisticated women of India it is necessary to have a brief survey of the roles played by them in different spheres of life. It is to be remembered here the womenfolk first discovered agriculture. Gradually, major agricultural operation and production works went to the menfolk. The weaker works are undertaken by the female agricultural workers even today. Then there are certain agricultural rites and rituals which are exclusive to women. In ancient days, menfolk were busy for hunting and grazing of cattle for means of subsistence. During this time it is the cattle which were their capital. They lived in groups. From groups the organisation of family and society arose and gradually towns and cities came into existence one after another. With the advent of the cities and towns, people were again divided into villagefolk and townsfolk—unsophisticated and sophisticated groups. However sophisticated may be, in the character of the womenfolk of the town there is an apparant tendency of being kind to all human being and nature like the unsophisticated village women. She is sympathetic to every creations of the world. This is not a show or an outward thing. She develops herself with that great quality where she receives the helping hand of the nature. This magnanimous attitudes of her makes her affectionate and loving. From this again, she attains softness, lovliness, and sweetness. This sweetness is like the light, it is a power which cannot be measured by the scale but if a woman does not get this mildnes, cannot be successful in her life., Thus she cannot inspire her counterparts. In the creative works of the man she is inspiration. The inexpressible mildness makes her beautiful by which she makes a man active. Without her inspiration generally a man is unable to do things in its right perspective, he cannot make a thing perfect. Thus it is said that in the courage of a hero, in the ability and efficiency of a worker, in the creations of an artist and such other perseverances, it is the inspiration of a woman that not only guide a man but also lead to the perfection of his creations.[149] Therefore it is she who is the source for accurate, just and beautiful works, it is she who makes the world gay and sprightly by her propitious touch, are beleived by the Indians. This is why the women are regarded as the great power in India who have two forms ; one form is motherhood. It is said that the hands that rocks the cradle rules the world.[150] The other is wifehood. She has a great

149. Tagor, Rabindranath, *Rabinda Rachanabali* vol. 13 Govt. of West Bengal Edn. Calcutta.

150. মাতাই জাতির ভাগ্য নিয়ন্ত্রী so মা নেই যার, না' নেই তার, or
হাটে মাটে ঘুরে এলাম, ঘাটে নেই না (নৌকা)
রণে বনে ফিরে এলাম, ঘরে নেই মা and মায়ে নায়ে সমান ।

perseverance as a mother and this perseverance is not for a son but a good and dutiful son. It is not by quantity by which one can measure a dutiful son but he is known by the quality.[151] As a wife, she inspires his beloved to do all good things and help him to do things perfect, speedy, makes him active and efficient.

A women acquires this quality from her sweetness, from the loving spirit and beauty she owns. This sweetness and other qualities are her luxuries and the mildness and chastity tells of her character, but the status and position of women in the society and family varies according to time and age. The position of the women has never been dealt with all her intricacies. As a matter of fact, we cannot tell her status by treating her position as a daughter, as an youth, as a virgin, as a maiden, as a sister, as a sister-in-law, as a married woman, as a wife, as a co-wife, as a mother, as a mother-in-law, and so forth. In all these she has different roles to play and nobody has treated her with all the totality so far. It is to be noted that in her life time a woman functions simultaneously in different positions—she is a mother of one, a daughter of one, a sister of one, a wife of one, a sister-in-law of the other, a mother-in-law of the housewife, a grandmother so on and so forth. Again, a Indian woman has special roles viz. *nanad, bhabi, ja, thakurjhee*, widowed sister, sister-in-law, etc. Everybody have distinct roles either in the family or in the social, political or public life. A Hindu woman can thus be classified in the following table taking daughter as a base point :

TABLE I

Women in her life cycle

Daughter	
Unmarried	Married
Sister, nanad, nicce, sister-in-law, grand daugher etc.	Mother, step-mother, mother-in-law, grand-mother, sister-in-law, (nanad), wife, co-wife, parent's aunt. sister-in-law may be wife's sisters, husband's brother's wife, and mother-in-law may be husband's parent's aunts etc. *Ja, bhaj*, bhasurjhee, thakurjhee, bonjhee etc.

151. ছেলে না হবার এক জ্বালা ছেলে হবার শতেক জ্বালা।
মূর্খ পুত্র নষ্ট স্ত্রী, তার চাইতে কষ্ট কি!
ছেলে নষ্ট হাটে, বউ নষ্ট ঘাটে।
মা জানে পুতের দরদ।

The kinship terms that are spoken by the Bengali women of different castes and groups may be given in the following table :

TABLE II

A few Bengali kinship term of the

Daughter-in-law

For men	*For women*
thakur, sasur, baba—father-in-law.	*thakurma dadi, mago* -grand mother.
talaimasai—father-in-law of husband's brother or sister	*sasuri, thakuran, ma*—mother-in-law.
dadasasur—father-in-law's father, uncle, etc.	*thakur-jhee*—husband's sister.
mamasasur—husband's maternal grand-father.	*bhasur jhee*—husband's elder brother's dau ghter.
khursasur, jethasasur etc.—husband's uncle.	*deor-jhee*—daughter of husband's younger brother.
bat-thakur, bhasur—husband's elder brother.	*bon-jhee*—sister's daughter.
chot-thakur, devar—husband's younger bother.	*bhai-jhee*—brother's baughter.
thakurjamai, nandai — father-in-law's son-in-law.	*nanad*—husban's elder sister.
thakur-po—husband's younger brother.	*satin, satai*—co-wife.
deor-po—son of husband's younger brother.	*bhagni*—daughter of husband's sister, niece.
bhasur-po—husband's elder brother's son.	*bhagnebau*—wife of husband's sister's son (husband's nephew).
bhagina, bhagne—son of husband's sister.	*pisas*—husband's father's sister.
bar, khasam, bhatar, swami, pati swami etc—husband.	*didisasuri*—husband's parental grand-mother.
bon-po—sister's son.	*mamisauri*—husband's maternal grand-mother.
bhai-po—brother's son.	*ja, didi, chhoto ja*, etc.—wife of husband's brother.
saya—husband of a female friend.	*barki*—eldest daughter-in-law wife of husband's eldest brother.
behai, baibahik—father-in-law of a son or daughter, father of a sin-in-law or daughter-in-law.	*ajima*—maternal grand mother.
putro, put, chhele, pola, beta, chawal, khoka etc.—son.	*mayoima*—mother-in-law of husband's brother or sister.
pautra, nati etc.—grandson.	*natni, poutri*—grand daughter.
prapautra—great grandson.	*not-bau*—wife of grand son
taimahasaya—husband's sister's father-in-law.	*prapautri* -great grant grand daughter.
mamu, mama, khalui etc. -*maternal* uncle.	*pitamahi*—paternal grandmother.
kanin putra—son of anunmarried girl.	*abui ma*—mother-in-law of brother or sister.
satpola—son of a co-wife	*maiya, kanya, tanaya, meyechele, jhee, biti, cheri, jhewari*—daughter.
bonai, bhagnipati—sister's husband.	*kaki, chachi, khurima, kakima, jethima, pisima, masima, khala*—aunt, wife of father's brothers, sisters and mother's sister.
kaka, kaku, chacha, khura etc.—parental uncle.	*putra-badhu, bau, bouma* etc.—daughter-in-law.
jamai, jamata, damad etc.—son-in-law. etc.	*baudi, bauthan*—wife of elder brother. or daughter's mother-in-law.
	sai, sayela—wife's girl friend.
	bhala-manusher jhi, bau etc.—daughter-in-law. etc.

All these speak of her different positions in the family.

The position of working women and non-working women differs considerably. Further, among the working-women there are different classes; women of the lower class—agricultural workers, industrial workers, daily workers, domestic servants; working women of the upper class—teachers, officers, executives, receptionists, steno-typists, clerks, telegraphists, telephone operators, etc. in addition to those who work in the upper level in the government and in the commerce—Prime Minister, Chief Minister, Governor, Ambassador, Directors of different companies, etc. Among the working women of all classes there are married women and unmarried women. This two class groups have different problems peculiar to their own. The problems of the married women are centered round her husband's family and her children while to how get herself married and settled in life is one of the greatest problems for an unmarried girl so to their parents.

There are instructions for all the different positions of her life as to how a woman should behave with others in the family, with relatives of parent's and husband's family[152] and friends in their life-cycle. The position of womenfolk varies along with the position and status of her parent's or husband's family. According to family structure and status the demands and needs of different classes of women are observed. As for example, a peasant woman is happy with a *sari*, woven in red

152. গুরুষু ভৃত্যবর্গেষু নায়ক ভগিনীষু
তৎ পতিষু চ যর্থাহং প্রতিপত্তি। ॥ ৫ ॥
ভোজনে রুচিতমিদম্ অস্যৈ হেয়মিদম্ পথ্যমিদম্
অপথ্যমিদম্ ইতি চ বিদ্যাৎ ত্যাগোপাদানার্থম ॥ ১৭ ॥
মহানসং সুগুপ্তং স্বাদ্ দর্শনীয়ং চ। ॥ ১৮ ॥
স্বস্য চ সারস্য পরেভ্যো।
হনাখ্যানিং ভর্তৃমন্ত্রিতস্য চ ॥ ৩০ ॥
দৈবসিকায়ব্যয়পিণ্ডীকরণম্
ইতি চ বিদ্যাৎ ॥ ৩৩'৯ ॥
নিত্য-নৈমিত্তিকেষু কর্মসুচিতে ব্যাঃ,
তদারব্ধানং চ কর্মনাং সমাপনে মতি। ৪৭। বাৎস্যায়নসূত্র

and again (বিবাহমঙ্গল, শ্রীবিধুশেখর ভট্ট চার্য
উচিত বলিতে পারে গালি, পোয়ে ঝিয়ে হয় বেহালী (কলহ)
কান্না শুনিয়া (লোকের বিপদে) বাহির না হয়, নাচে গীতে ধাইয়া যায়।
ভাল থার আয় না বুঝে, বোল্ বলিতে উত্তর যুক্তে।
ভাল বলিতে রোষ করে, তাহার স্বামী কেন থাকে ঘরে
রৌদ্রে রান্ধে কাঠে খড়ে, বর্ষাকালে চাল আঁচড়ে ॥
ওদা (ভিজা) হাতে কাড়ে লবণ, গুরু গেরাসে করে ভোজন।
এক বলিতে দু' বোল বলে, স্বামী শয্যা পায়ে টালে
অতিথি দেখলে কুপিত হয়, দাসদাসীকে প্রবল কয়
না বুঝে প্রাণের হাসি কান্না, সে গিন্নীর কেন ঘরকন্না!

thread, a looking glass, a comb etc.[153] when a woman of the upper class is always after modern amenities of life. Therefore to understand the position of Bengalee women it is always better to see them through class struggle. Innumerable materials are available in different genre of Indian folklore which are included in this paper. We should confess that this is not a very comprehensive study, it is an incomplete account, as any account of human society must always be. (*Continued*)

153: আয়না আনছি, চেরণ আনছি, (আর) আনছি লোলা ঝুমঝুমি
(আর) চুল বান্ধনের ফিতা আনছি, রাঙাচুতার কাপড় আনছি,
রসবতীর মালা নিবিনি ও আহ্লাদি ! (লোকসঙ্গীত পূর্ববঙ্গ)

* * *

গিন্নী হয়ে রূপে ভোলে, স্বামীর পিঁড়ি পায়ে ঠেলে।
প্রভাত কালে নিদ্রা যায়, বাসি শয্যা সূর্য্য না পায়।
উদয়ে ছড়া, সাঁজে তাড়া, সে গিন্নির মুখ পোড়া।
চড়কা (উঁচু) পিড়ি চড়ক (খাট) খুতি,
রান্ধে বাড়ে না লাগি কাহি (কাদা)।
স্বামীর সেবা, সাঁজেবাতি ডাক বলে লক্ষ্মীর স্মৃতি।
কাঁখে কলসী পানিক যায়, হেঁট মুণ্ডে কাকেও না চায়।
যেন যায় তেন আইসে, ডাক বলে গৃহিণী সে।
ঘরে স্বামী, বাহিরে বইসে, চারি পানে চায় মুচকি হেসে।
হেন স্ত্রীরে যাহার বাস, তাহার কেন জীবনের আশ।

again রান্ধি বাড়ি যেবা নারী পুরুষের আগে খায়, ভরা কলসির জল হরাণে শুকায়।
এলায়ে মাথার কেশ ফিরে পাড়া পাড়া, লক্ষ্মী বলে সেই নারী যেন লক্ষ্মীছাড়া।

আর

again, বাইদ্যানীলো যদি যাবি আমার বাড়ী, কিন্যা দিমু জর্জেট শাড়ী।
আর দিমু জলে ভাসা সাবান লো, ও তোর নাকে দিমু নড়বড়ি।।
বাইদ্যারে বাবুর লগে চইল্যা যামু, ট্যাহা পামু গয়না পামু।
আর পামু সোনার পুঁথির মালা রে, আমি চড়ব হাওয়ার গাড়ী রে।।

* * *

এক পয়সার মিঠাই কিন্যা পথে যাইলাম খাইয়্যা
বাড়ী আ ইলে পরে বউয়্যা কিলায় গায়ের গন্ধ পাইয়্যা। (বাংলার পল্লীগীতি ১৯৬৬) (Con'd)

All India Folklore Conference

To be held at Calcutta in December, 1969

under the auspices of the Indian Folklore Society

Kindly contact General Secretary at 3, British Indian Street, Calcutta-1 for details

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FIRST INTERNATIONAL FOLK FESTIVAL AND SCIENTIFIC CONGRESS AT BUCHAREST

Mankind today faces a crisis of global dimensions. Men of different races draw apart, emphasizing their differences, seemingly ignoring those things which belong to their peace and wholeness as a human family. Material levels also divide. Luxury among the have-nations contrast starkly with deprivation among many peoples of older civilization and ex-colonized areas. Everywhere, science proliferates gadgets, yet at the same time has serious consequences, eroding religion, questioning man's transcendental dimension, and threatening his future on the plant. Technology, seems to have run away into triviality of malevolence. Yet never was there a greater awareness of mankind's ills, never greater yearning, especially among the young, for a profound change in man's direction.

Accordingly, it was fitting that the First International Folk Festival and the Fifth International Folk Narrative Congress called at Bucharest by the State Committee of Culture and Art of Socialist Romania and the International Society for Folk Narrative Research from August 26 to September 6th and August 26 to August 31 respectively. The State Committee, it was announced, has decided to hold the Folk Festival again in 1972 and this will be a regular feature on every third year.

It should be emphasised that the traditional hospitality of the people of Romania is a guarantee for the success of such a function as the First International Folk Festival. Here a foreigner will be able to bask in the cool sea breeze or in exhilarating ozoniferous air of the heights, to relax in a pleasant landscape in Europe, and to visit picturesque towns. He will be able to see priceless historical monuments, works of folk and modern arts and many others. The country has a long-standing tradition, with a folk-art that has brought her fame all over the world. The open air museum at Tirgu Jiu which comprises some best known works of the great Romanian sculptor C. Brancusi or the peerless treasury in the North of Moldavia, the monasteries with interior and exterior frescos which due to their great artistic value have long since belonged to the patrimony in world culture. In the

festival more than 15 countries participated, who also sent their folk song and dance troups. Here delegates from India to Czechoslovakia, USSR to USA came, met and exchanged their ideas. It was a world forum which is a way to help respective governments to tighten their cultural and friendly ties.

The Festival and Congress do not change the world overnight; but assemblies of such type from accross the globe, as met in Bucharest from August 26 to Sept., 6, 1969, have the potentials so to do. No one could doubt organisers' aspiration for a better world, their hope and their vision. History will testify to their commitment.

Necessary to report that the Govt. of India wanted to send a troupe of folk song and dance, which ultimately did not materialise. However, it sent two workers of folklore—Mr. Sankar Sen Gupta and Dr. K. D. Upadhyaya who represented Govt. of India in the Festival and the Congress. The Indian delegates were assisted by Mr. Radu Surdulescu who served them as an interpreter from Romanian to English. Mr. Sankar Sen Gupta represented all the sessions of the Scientific Congress and the Folk Festival as the representative of the Govt. of attend to the Scientific Congress and Festival held from Sept. 1st India. Since Dr. Upadhayaya left Bucharest August 31 he could not to 6th. Mr. Sen Gupta was selected as a member of the Presidium in the afternoon session of the Scientific Congress on 2nd Sept., 1969. His interviews appeared in he News Bulletin and another interview was broadcasted by the Radio Romania.

In another interview, Mr. Sankar Sen Gupta, who, respects such effort said, mankind as a whole needed to be rehabilitated. New movements of folk level would free man from the civilization of things, not of persons, from the meaningless of preoccupation with money, and from the violence which characterized so many of the relations between man and man today. He who seeks the explanation for that remarkable phenomenon in life of nations called the International Folk Festival which has become a forum for all the nations. It is a thoughtful contribution to the Folklore Movement and here one finds the roots of nations indissoluble, truly brotherly ties.

It is necessary to point out that the Folk Festival and Scientific Congress brought together the Indian delegates and delegates of folk-song and dance troupes of other countries like U.S.S.R. Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Hungary, France, England, East and West Germany, U.S.A Italy, Poland, Mongolia, Tunisia, Lebanon etc. with the Organising Committee and people of Romania. Delegates were asked to discuss and analyse the issues raised by the scholars of the different countries on the aim, scope, methodology, and future of folklore research.

Dr. Stith Thompson (U. S. A.). Dr. Kurt Ranke President of the ISFNR, Dr. K. M. Briggs (Great Britain) Dr. A. Dundes (U. S. A.), Dr. R. M. Dorson (U. S. A.) Dr. W. Hand (U. S. A.), Dr. L. Honko (Sweeden), Dr. Y. Pino Saavedra, Dr. H. Wilsdrof (DDR) Dr. V. K. Sokolova (USSR), Dr. R. Niculescu (Romania) Dr. J. N. Ure (Ghana), Dr. J. Sabogal (Peru) Dr. D'Arcy Hayman, (UNESCO) Dr. W. F. H. Nicolasion (Scotland) Dr. Kiril Pennsiski (Yugoslavia), Dr. Michael Krones (Transylvania), Dr. Andru Klimov (USSR) Dr. Liliana Bogdanova (Bulgaria) Dr. G. Profeta, (Italy) Dr. R. Vulcanesca (Romania) Dr. Monette-Raymonde Riberrol (Paris) Mr. Sankar Sen Gupta (India) and many others were present. Dr. Hari S. Upadhyaya participated the Narrative Congress as a delegate from U.S.A. & Dr. K. D. Upadhyaya presided over a sectional meeting there due to the absence of the sectional President, Dr. G. Ortutay. It was a Congress of world order. The central aim for this, as declared by the Organising Committee, is to develop international understanding. Besides the Govt. of the Socialist Republic of Romania for their generous help and co-operation with the organisers, Prof. Dr. Mihai Pop. Chairman, Organising Committee, Dr. Ovidiu Papadima, Dr. Paul Petrescu, Dr. Vladustu and the workers, scholars and officials deserve thanks for organising such a neat, useful and timely Congress and Festival.



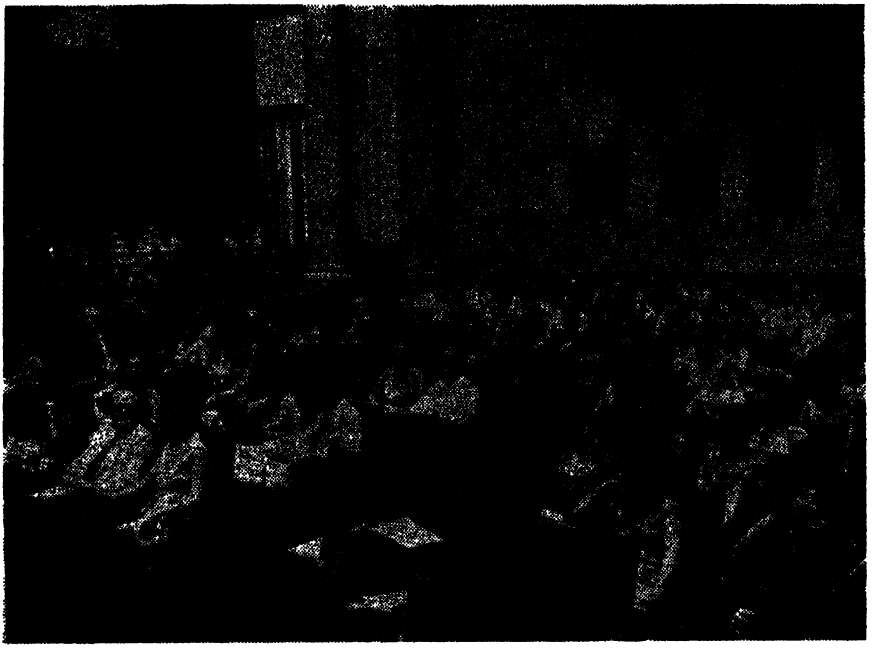
Prof. Dr. Doc. Mihai Pop, Chairman, Organising Committee (left) and Prof. Dr. Kurt Ranke, President elect.



Prof. Dr. Stith Thompson Mrs. Thompson and Prof. Dr. Wayland Hand, of Los Angels in Bucharest.



Prof Dr. R. M. Dorson, Director, Folklore Institute, Bloomington, Sankar Sen Gupta (Centre) and Prof. Dr. K. M. Briggs, Chairman, Folklore Society, London are discussing the problems of Indian folklore research at Bucharest



A view of the inaugural session of the Folk Narrative Congress. Indian delegates are seen among others

THE INTERNATIONĀL GAUDEAMUS COMPETITION for interpreters of contemporary music will be held from 1st to 6th April 1970 in Rotterdam in cooperation with the Rotterdam Arts Council.

The competition is open to vocalists and instrumentalists, not older than 35 years of age, to ensembles not exceeding 9 performers, which average age does not exceed 35 years.

The participants have to send in a programme with a total duration of at least 60 minutes, which has to meet the following conditions :

(a) all works must have been composed after 1920 ;

(b) at least two works must have been composed after 1950 ;

(c) at least two works must have been composed by Dutch composers.

Five prizes will be awarded. THE 1st PRIZE AMOUNTS TO 3000 DUTCH GUILDERS.

THE INTERNATIONAL GAUDEAMUS COMPOSERS' COMPE-

TITION will be organiser on the occasion of the annual International Gaudeamus Music Week and will include :

an international competition for choir—, chambermusic—, orchestra—and electronic works.

Composers, born after January 1st 1934 can participate. Entries, which must be sent in under pseudonym, are acceptable until JANUARY 31st 1970.

The International Gaudeamus Music Week will take place from 9-18 September 1970.

GILBERT AMY will be the leader of the analysis course, which will be held during the International Gaudeamus Music Week.

* * * * * * *

All India Folklore Conference under the auspices of the Indian Folklore Society will be held in Calcutta in December next. Interested persons are requested kindly to contact the General Secretary of the Indian Folklore Society, 3 British Indian Street, Calcutta-1 (India(for details. (Press Note).

JUST PUBLISHED

Agricultural Labourers in India a study in the history of their growth and economic condition by Dr. Kamal Kumar Ghosh, Univ. of Calcutta. Rs. 28.00

Occupational Mobility and Caste Structure in Bengal : study of Rural Market, by Dr. P. K. Bhowmick University of Calcutta. Rs. 15.00

Industrial Profile of the Calcutta Metropolitan District by Dr. Bireswar Banerjee & Prof. Debika Roy Rs. 28.50

Land and People of the Himalaya study of the day of the land and the people and their surroundings by Dr. S. C. Bose Gorakhpur University. Rs. 30.00

Studies in Museum and Muscology in India by Prof. D. P. Ghosh, Asutosh Museum of Indian Art, Calcutta, University Rs. 18.50

Indian Publications, Publishers & Book-sellers,
3, British Indian Street, Calcutta-1

BOOK-REVIEW

SRIHATTER LOK-SANGEET (In Bengali, Folksongs of Shylet Ed. by Gurusaday Dutt, ICS, Dr. Nirmalendu Bhowmick, University of Calcutta, Demy, 228+447, 1966. Rs. 15.00

The volume is a selection of 380 songs from 423 songs collected by late G. S. Dutt from his native district, Srihatta (Shylet, now East Pakistan). The manuscripts of the songs were deposited to the University of Calcutta by Mr. Dutt for publication on 3rd Sept. 1969 with a forewording note where he wrote—"I have had them recorded in exactly the same dialect in which they are sung which I need hardly say, is the most important consideration in the genuineness of folk-song." He also wanted to contribute a suitable introduction to the book explaining the nature and scope of the collection but this he could not do because he died on the 25th June, 1941 and the University could take no decesion for its publication before his death. It is now presented to the reader as a posthumous piece after about 30 years where the reader is apt to imagine that the collector is no more; but as a matter of fact he is very much alive. The editor, Dr. Bhowmick explains how these songs are the tombstones and record of living institutions, which, emblamed in relative terminology.

The book has come to the light due to the encouragement of late Dr. S. B. Das Gupta, the then Ramtanu Lahiri Professor of the University of Calcutta, Nirmalendu Bhowmick, a research assistant for 1957 to 1960 under him, was entrusted to edit the songs collected by G. S. Dutt with a modern outlook and technique so that a contemporary reader be pleased to say that a right person has been selected for a right cause.

The book is divided into two parts. First part of the book is devoted to the introduction of 228 pages and it is as exhaustive as possible. It courageous scholars in many ways and does nothing to carry favour with the conventional : it suggests, for instance, that a regional monograph of the kind must contain such materials as that of the land, people, environment, the role of song in the life and living and so on. Pecularities and characterestics of songs and dialects which deeply rooted in hope for mankind have been considered here and that makes it a cause for gratitude. Besides the 380 songs collected by G. S. Dutt some more songs are also included in the appendix. All the songs are classified subjects-wise. Word notes of the songs are also given wherever possible. It is a commandable work for the new generation who needs to know of the great past of his country and people.

Dr. Bhowmick has tried his best to make the book authentic and intertsting not only by his lucid and vivid introduction but also by carefully edited text and faithful notes. The volume is bound to evoke interests amongst folklorists and others interested to the subject.

—SSG

EDITORIAL

BIRTH CENTENARY OF MAHATMA GANDHI

The modern concept of the Welfare State owes its origin to the application of Utilitarianism in the economic field. Applying 'the Greatest Happiness Principle', Bentham made 'Utility' the keystone of the arch of modern Welfare Economics. Matimisation of Happiness meant maximisation of Utility. This became the motive-force behind the welfare of the individual as also of the community and the State was to further his end. Any change which would increase Utility and Happiness, Bentham, would welcome as a good change and such change the Benthamite welfare-economist would accept as a change increasing the welfare of the community. Thus, Welfare Economics in the hands of the Utilitarians, became a branch of ethics, a field where the concept of the Good according to the Happiness-standard stood for ready application. In Mill's the idea of the Welfare State receives a complete and original treatment. It is coloured as much by his views of the Individual, the State and Society, as by his standard of the Good and liberal humanism. There is role of Economics in social science for increasing human welfare. In recent times, the utilitarian Welfare Economics has been developed. Welfare Economics is a normative, not an ethical study. Modern Welfare States are mainly following the directive and pattern of the State set for them long ago by the Utilitarians in the name of democratic economic planning.

The Welfare Economics in India has become a branch of ethics, a field where concept of the Good according to the Happiness-standard stood for ready application. Gandhiji's view of Welfare State is not simply the product of rigid application of the Utility doctrine to economics; it is the result of a wide review of the entire sociological field. He stressed more on the role of Economics as an applied social science for increasing human welfare than on its theoretics. On the eve of Gandhi Centenary in 1969 starts on October 2 not only we recall him and his theory but also people all over the world are paying homage to the great Son of India, who champinioned the cause of universal brotherhood of man and fought for truth, justice, peace and prosperity. Application of truth and non-violence of the achievement of social and political objectivities is Mahatma Gandh's distinctive contribution to

human affairs. His achievements were many, each one of which, judged by the greatness of its execution or in its results for human welfare would have made his name immortal anywhere in the world. He brought freedom from foreign subjection to a faith of the human race. He freed millions of human beigns from the shakless of caste tyranny and social indignity. He laid the foundation for a new way of life which may one day well provide an effective alternative both a regimented and an acquisitive economy. Gandhi stands for a planned economy where individual enterprise is wedded to a system of liberal, democratic planning by the State with a view to augmenting the material welfare of the masses. He was essentially a moral force whose appeal is to the conscience of man and therefore universal. For this the year 1969 is being observed throughout the world as the Centenary Year of Mahatma Gandhi, apostle of non-violeice and father of the nation.

ALL INDIA FOLKLORE CONFERENCE

We are pleased indeed to know that An All India Folklore Conference would be held in Calcutta in December next after 1964 under the auspices of the Indian Folklore Society. The ensuing conference will be divided, as far as we know, into some sectional meetings. The general and this sectional congress will be devoted to folksongs, etc, folk & tribal literature, etc. and folk arts & crafts etc. where delegates and members must, we hope, think of utilising the tremendous store of regional collections for inculcating the fundamental human values of courages, of loyalty, of truth and tolerance.

Usually people dare not act for themselves or think for themselves but follow others, and what is much more to be deplored, follow outworn slogans and dogmas, which now have lost their validity. So it is nobody acts for or by himself. One becomes a divided and disintegrated personality. The result, we see all around in the form of regional, linguistic, communal and other group rivalries and conflicts. In this context, we welcome All India Folklore Conference for taking some definite and active steps to counter the potential danger rivalries and conflicts. Prompt and positive steps must be taken to make the people realise the stark reality that thecountry is one indivisible and folklorists have great roles to play to educate people to that way so the forthcoming conference.

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FOLKLORE OCTOBER, 1969

October 1969 Vol. XI No. 10

MUSIC OF INDIA VI

PURNIMA SINHA

FOLK CLASSICAL CONTINUUM IN INDIAN MUSIC

One interesting feature of the musicial forms of the peoples of India is the nature of continuity between the most advanced classical forms and the simple songs of the peasants and the tribals. This theme has been explored in detail with reference to the songs of Pargana Barabhum of former Manbhum district of Bihar.

Introduction :

It is a common belief in India that Classical Indian music has been created by the sages of the Vedic Period. But it seems improbable that a set of sages or intellectuals could deliberately plan to build up such a complex and diversified musical system like Indian *Raga* music without any initial basic materials in popular form. When we look around today, we find that the common people sing in groups in different ways on diverse occasions like levelling a house top, carring a load, marriage and many other festivals. It appears that the different human groups tend instinctively to set their work for livelihood and social activities in some rhythmic pattern and some melody set in rhythm becomes spontaneously associated with the rhythm of their various activities. It seems very unlikely that the common people of ancient India did not have any songs to express their moods and sentiments and to enliven their daily and seasonal activities.

It is reasonable to speculate that when ancient Indian society reached a phase of urbanisation it provided scope for gifted individual specialists

to create complicated musical forms by synthesizing and universalizing the diverse folk traditions that flowed into these centres. It appears that such creative systematisation of musical forms also stimulated the scholars with musical taste to build up a theoretical base of grammar of music. Panini, the famous scholar of Sanskrit grammar also contributed to the development of the theory of Indian Classical music. The universal appeal of Indian Classical music perhaps lies in the fact that the principles underlying the building up of Classical music are derived from diverse sources of spontaneous popular creation of a variety of ethnic groups in India.

The evolution of music from folk forms seems to have followed a course parallel to that of language, e.g. from Prakrit to Sanskrit. It is known that grammarians like Panini came to the scene only after the Sanskrit language had already come into being. It may safely be assumed that the theoreticians of Indian Classical music like Bharatmuni, Matanga and others operated on the empirical base of existing classical forms created by practicing musicians. The theoreticians in their turn contributed to a conscious systematic expansion of the classical musical forms. I have already mentioned earlier (Sinha 1959 : 67) that it is difficult to trace the historic stages of evolution of Indian music from textual records alone. The ancient texts, as also the names of some of the *Ragas* indicate that many of the Ragas might have been derived from regional (Deshi) motifs. There are, however, no descriptive records of these Deshi motifs other than Matanga's (Matanga : 39) suggestion that in contrast to the *Marga Sangeet* Deshi may have less than five notes. I have discussed in detail (Sinha 1968) why it is not possible to build up a raga with less than five notes.

The limitations of the textual approach in drawing up a plausible scheme of evolution of Indian music may partly be countervailed through comparative study of contemporary forms of tribal, folk and classical music which still persist in different regions, retaining distinctive character. This has been possible due to the slow rate of industrialisation and development of modern means of communication in rural India.

It should however be stressed that even in pre industrial India, tribal and peasant villages were not completely isolated from the urban centres of civilisation. There was slow but perennial contact between the rural and urban centres through travelling pilgrims, mendicants, Sadhus and varieties of cultural performers. Thus there was a situation which promoted the stabilisation of narrow regional styles, but at the same time allowed the local motifs to be elaborated, systematised and absorbed in the classical tradition by specialists who came in contact with the rural areas. On the other hand, the classical forms must also have percolated into the rural areas and formed local variants through a process of dilu-

tion. Such processes must have brought about many changes in the original folk forms, some new dimensions might have been evolved, but still it seems that some characteristic core pattern have been retained, as it happens in the case of the growth of a child to adulthood, when in spite of many developments the person can be identified.

There is a great wealth of varieties of characteristic regional folk music distributed over different parts of India. Compared to the abundance of available materials, very little work has so far been done in analysing the samples in a systematic way and preserving them in the form of records and notations. Notations of some tribal and folk songs have been published by S. M. Tagore (Tagore : 1879). The Folklore and Folk Music Research Institute has started collecting tape records of folk music of different regions and has published an anthology (Biswas et. al. 1967). Tape records of folk music of different regions have been collected by the Anthropological Survey of India. S. Bhattacharya of Anthropological Survey has dealt with some aspects of folk music of Belpahari area (Bhattacharya 1968 : 66-79). I assume that institutions like All India Radio, Sangeet Natak Academy and the various Tribal Research Institutes in the different States have a wealth of tapes on tribal and folk music from different regions of India. No classified inventory of these are available for insterested scholars.

The problem of analysis of folk music may be divided into the following two parts :

(1) to trace the connection, if any, between classical and folk music
(2) to locate the special characteristic of folk music as distinct from classical music.

In this paper I shall deal mainly with the first part of the problem.

Folk-Classical continuum :

If we assume that folk music of different areas have contributed to the development of Indian Classical Music, it is not enough just to keep records of the notations of the music of different areas, but we have to work out a method of finding out the principles underlying the selection of characteristic modes of combination of musical notes in the songs of different region and the various forms of classical music.

Not enough theoretical work has been done in modern India to provide a tool for analysing music. I have given before (Sinha 1968 : 476) a brief description of the method of analysis and classification of *Khegal* songs proposed by Sanyal in the book *Ragas and Raginis* (Sanyal 1959). In this paper I shall apply the same method to some tribal and folk songs in order to find out whether the basic principles underlying the melodic

motifs of the tribal songs have any link with those of classical music. I shall not be concerned with covering the total range of tribal and folk music of the Indian sub-continent, or deal even with all the varieties of folk music of Bengal in detail, but focus attention on tribal and folk music of a particular region, namely Pargana Barabhum of former Manbhum district in order to analyse and illustrate a pattern of continuum in formal structure from the tribal to the folk and classical levels. The tribal songs have been selected for detailed analysis in this paper because the melodic movements of these songs are simplest and thus they are expected to show the rudiments of basic structural principles of musical forms more clearly compared to those of the elaborate forms.

As I am mainly interested in looking into the tribal musical forms in relation to the general problem of evolution of classical music, I have selected a region where tribal groups are not completely isolated from the peasant and urban communities. Pargana Barabhum represents such a transitional cultural zone where tribal and peasant traditions have been synthesised in a regional pattern.

Before describing the musical forms of Barabhum, I shall make some general remarks about some of the well known folk forms of East and West Bengal.

In most of the contemporary folk songs of Bengal, notes corresponding to some classical *Ragas* are used. The full fledged *Ragas*, however are not consciously developed, the strict principles of sequences are not always adhered to and occasionally shades of different *Ragas* are used in the same composition. In many cases though, the rules of *Raga* music are strictly maintained in compositions of folk songs. For such cases it is almost impossible to distinguish the folk songs from light classical songs on the basis of analysis of melodic patterns. The only distinction is that there is no rigorous training system or centre for learning folk music, which is born through spontaneous human expression and is developed in rural setting.

The most important folk songs of Bengal are the songs of religious mendicants or *Bauls* and *Bhatiali*, the songs of the boatman. There are also many other forms of folk songs prevalent in different region of Bengal—songs of boat race, marriage songs, devotional songs of Vaishnava mendicants, Jarigan, Kabigan (the extempore composition of songs by two debating parties usually based on parts of one or other mythological stories) and so on.

The most frequently used tunes in Bengali folk music approaches the raga *Jhinjhit* which is based on the scale *Khambaj*:

C D E F G A B^{b}C

and has the characteristic movement:

CDF, GFEDCB^{b} A 1 ACCDE, DEC (1)

This form of *Jhinjhit* is called *Kasauli Jhinjhit* (Chakravarty 1954).

The more common form of *Jhinjhit* used in North Indian classical music has the following characteristic movement :

CDF, GFEDCEB^{b}AG, GACDEFE, AC (2)

Kasauli Jhinjhit may have been derived from folk music. Motif (1) is common in almost all types of folk songs of Bengal –specially in *Bhatiali*. In Baul songs in some cases, it changes more toward *Bilwal* by using B instead of B^{b}.

CDEG \BAC, BAGFEDEFEDC

In most cases, for particular compositions, consistent rules for ascent are maintained. For example, for a particular song, either of the following movements may be chosen and strictly adhered to (*ibid*) :

CDFG
CDEG
CDEFG

Reference of records[1] of some specimens of common types of folk songs of Bengal have been given at the end of this article. From listening to the records one can have some idea about the melodic pattern of the folk songs, but the way of presentation and the nature of accompanying instruments used by the "urban" folk singers are quite different from those of the rural people. Thus the full flavour of the genuine folk songs is not presented in these records. With these prediminary remarks we may now move on towards a detailed discussion on the patterns of the folk and tribal music in Pargana Barabhum.

Folk and Tribal Music of Barabhum :

Before analysing the melodic pattern of the songs of the diverse tribes and castes of Parganas Barabhum I shall give a brief description of the ethnic and social background of the various categories of songs. Most of these songs were collected from the villages Nimdih, Ketunga and Madhupur in Chandil Police Station Area.

Ethnic Background * :

There are about 64 tribes and castes forming a population of nearly

* Information on the ethnic background of Pargana Barabhum is based on published articles by Dr. Surajit Sinha who has done extensive field work in the area at different periods during 1950 - 1960 (See Sinha 1958, 1958a, 1962, 1965, 1966).

244,000 people in an area of 635 square miles in Pargana Brabhum in the former district of Manbhum. Among the diverse ethnic groups of this Pargana the most numerous are the Mahato, the Santhal and the Bhumij. The Bhumij, who are locally recognised as the original settlers of the Pargana, have lost their original Munda language, speak the local dialect of Bengali and have become Hinduised. While the bulk of the population of this Pargana are peasants, there are a few small tribes like the Kharia and the Pahira who are settled in isolated foothill hamlets and live on hunting and gathering.

During a period between the 12th and the 16th centuries the Bhumj tribe of this region evolved a series of small kingdoms from a tribal base and their upper starata came to be recognised as Rajput Kshatriyas. The cultural pattern of Barabhum thus provides a wide range of levels from the primitive hunters and gatherers to the artistocratic chieftains (Sinhas, 1962).

The songs of the region also represent the diversity of levels. Some are sung exclusively by tribal groups on specific ritual and festive occasions others are by the general peasantry in regional festivals where people belonging to many tribes and castes from many village meet at the festive ground. Some songs are sung by specialist dancing girls (*nachni*) or by their male trainers (*rasik*) under the patronage of the feudal aristrocacy. We also know that at least since the famous pilgrimage of Mahaprabhu Sri Chaitannya from Puri to Mathura there has been a deep impact of Gaudiya Vaishnavism in rituals and songs of the region (Sinha 1966). From the nature of the contemporary *Nachni* songs one gets the impression that the Gandiya Vaishnava impact was overlain on a more archaic stimulus of Sahajiya Vaishnavism (Datta-Majumder 1969).

The social stage and the types of songs :

It will be apparent to any observer that the poetic as well as melodic structure of songs have grown complex according to the "social stage" for the songs. These may be divided as follows :

(a) Songs limited to single tribal groups connected with exclusive rituals and festivals :

Sarhul songs : These songs are sung during Sarhul Parab (the festival of the first blossom of *sal* flowers) by the Bhumij, the Kharia or the Pahira.

(b) Songs limited to small group of females belonging to the various low castes and tribes in a village :

Karam songs--Songs sung by groups of females in a neighbourhood in a village on the occasion of *Karam* festival celebrated for the welfare

of crops and brothers during the month of *Bhadra* (August-September). (Sinha, S. 1956).

(c) Songs sung on special festive occasions in *Parab Tanr* (uplands where fairs and festivals take place) :

Sometimes these festivals are also connected with sacred bath e.g. *Tusu Parab* on the occasion of *Makar Samkranti*. The typical songs of this category belong to two groups : *Baduriya Danr Saila* and *Tusu*. *Bhaduriya Danr Saila* are now-a-days sung only by men while dancing in circles anti-clockwise. Formerly women of the lower castes and tribes used to take part in group dances in the month of *Bhadra* during *Ind* and *Chhata Parab* festivals. In some of these festivals huge umbrellas are raised in honour of the Raja of the Pargana or his subordinate Chiefs.

In *Tusu* festival the main singers are females. Young girls, in small neighbourhood groups, sing these songs every evening throughout the month of *Paus* (December-January). On the sacred date of *Makar-Samkranti* these small singing groups go out of the village with the goddess *Tusu* represented in the form of clay models or as cowdung balls to the nearby tank or to a distant riverside for sacred bath. On this occasion small groups of females carrying their own *Tusu* meet other groups from different villages on the way to the bathing site. They compete and join with one another in impromptu composition of songs without changing the melodic base.

In both *Bhaduriya Danr Saila* and *Tusu* songs the word themes and melodic structures have to be adequate for the multi-ethnic and large population who participate in these songs coming from a wide region.

(d) Songs sung by specialist *Jhumuriyas :*

Under the partonage of the Rajas and their subordinate Zamindars a number of composers of songs have become famous in the region— Dinabandhu, Narottam, Ramkrishna, Bhabapita, Lagonsai and so on. The composers of these songs, *Jhumurs*, are known as *Jhumuriyas ;* but the songs are mainly sung by dancing girls, *Nachni*. These songs are also known as *Nachni Saila* sung to the accompaniment of drums and *Shaina* trumpets. The amorous, yet celestial, love of Radha and Krishna form the themes of these *Jhumurs*.

Sometimes *Jhumurs* are also sung by gifted male or female workers in the paddy fields during the season of transplantation. These are known as *Ashariya Jhumur*. One also hears lone cowherds singing aloud these *Jhumurs* while tending cattle.

Jhumurs may also deal with spiritual symbols in *Dehatattva Jhumurs* sung by people attached to a *Sadhu* or holy person. Similar spiritual themes are sung in *Khyapar Dhua* songs.

The above types of songs do not exhaust the varieties of songs sung by the people of Barabhum. There are also songs sung in connection

with the festival of the cattle, *Ahira Geet,* varieties of songs connected with different phases of marriage ceremony, songs introducing the masked *Chhau* dances and obscene songs, *Ban Geet,* sung by young men to attract young girls in forests and lonely places. I shall also not deal with the special songs of the primitive Kharia and the Pahira tribes. The varieties of songs of the Santal have also not been dealt with.

A description of the method of Analysis :

I have described briefly the method of analysis of songs proposed by Sanyal (Sinha 1968 :ibid). For convenience of understanding the analysis of the folk and tribal songs of Barabhum to be presented in the next section, I will discuss Sanyal's method in more detail.

The basic assumption is that a *raga* based song rests on some pivotal points of notes related by *sambad* (consonance) or relations like C-G, and *anubad* (mediance) or relations like C-E or C-E^{b}. From analysis of many songs, Sanyal observed that the following conditions are generally fulfilled by songs labelled with *raga-rigini* names :

(1) A complete theme should essentially show a predominance of combined duration of a selected set of notes constituting a consonant chord or notes related as CEG, CE^{b}G, DFA, EGB etc., dist 'buted horizentally. Such combinations of notes are known as *"Khandameru"* * and have been termed as *"universals"* by Sanyal. The duration, or value of a *Khandameru* is measured by counting the duration of each of the three component notes of the *Khandameru,* in units of one beat in the rhythmic setting in a complete melodic theme. The three notes comprising a *Khandameru* may remain distributed in the composition and may not, and in general, do not, occur successively. For calculating the value of a particular *Khandameru,* the constituent notes of the *Khandameru* have to be selected from the total composition and value of each note has to be added together. A *raga* based musical composition subjected to such analysis is expected to yield a set of *Khandameru* with different values. In well established compositions, within *Raga-Ragini* frame work, the *Khandameru* with the highest value or the *dominent Khandameru* generally has a value at least 50% of the total value of all the notes in the composition.

At least one of the *Khandamerus* usually has a *complimentary Khandameru* with a common mediant e.g., EG in (CEG, EGB) or FA in

* The term *Khamdameru* may also be used as a general term representing other types of sectional presentation of the *meru* (succtssive arrangement of the 12 note scale), but for the purpose of the present analysis the term *Khandameru* would always indicate the particular combination of triple notes stated above.

(DFA, FAC) etc. These are known as *mithuna* or couple. We notice that one component of the couple is comprised of notes corresponding to a major, and the other to a minor chord. From the *Mithunas*, composite units of four notes like CEGB or DFAC, are formed. Such compressed units of *mithunas* are known as "*Matrikas*. According to Sanyal, the dominant *Matrika* or the *Matrika* formed from the dominant *Khandameru* reflects the basic character or core pattern of the musical theme. The value, of the dominant *Matrika* is measured by summing up the individual note value of each of the four notes constituting the *Matrika*. The value of the dominant *Matrika* for a well established composition should again be greater than 50% of the total value of all the notes.

The two conditions stated above should be considered to be the basic criteria for categorising a sample of song in a *raga-ragini* frame work. The *Matrika* composed of the dominant *Khandameru* defines the basic class of the *raga* or *ragini*. Subsidiary *Matrikas* composed of *Khandameru*s lower in value determine further sub-classification.

For searching for the dominant *Matrika* of a musical theme we have to start from the dominant *Khandameru* and look for its complimentary partner from the list of *Khandameru*s obtained from the composition. One *Khandameru* can combine with either of two partners to form a couple e.g., CEG can combine either with ACE or EGB. If both are present in the list the one having a value nearest to CEG has to be chosen, so that due weightage is given to the pre-dominance of *Khandameru*s in selecting the dominant *Matrika*. If no partner for the dominant *Khandameru* is present, then the *Khandameru* which comes next in value in the list is to be chosen to form the dominant *Mithuna*.

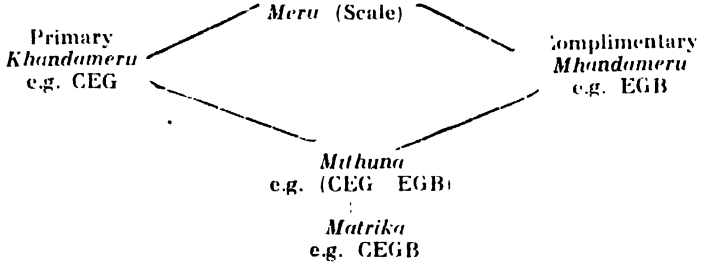


Fig. 1

The process of selecting the dominant *Matrika* is represented in Fig. 1

After selecting the dominant *Matrika*, its value is calculated by summing up the value of each of the four notes constituting the *Matrika*. The dominant *Matrika* is supposed to represent the basic class of the *Raga* or *Ragini*. After isolating the dominant *Matrika*, subsequent

Matrikas may be formed by the *Khandamerus* with lower values. The order and nature of the subsequent *Matrikas* determine the subclass of the composition.

Sanyal also states that in preparing the list of *Khandamerus*, if the value of a pair of notes related either by *Sambad* or by *anubad* is greater than 40% or "two fifth" of the total value of all the notes in the scale, then the third note required to complete the *Khandameru* has to be assumed to be present, or is supposed to be latent in the composition.

It may be pointed out that one should not seek mathematical justification for the so called "rule of two fifth" for locating the latent notes. It is a rule that has been empirically obtained by analysing many samples. For instance it has been observed in many cases that a note predicted by applying the rule to a part of a song is found to appear in the complete theme. Also, there are some songs conventionally labelled by a *Raga* name but do not show the basic *Matrika* corresponding to the class of the *Raga*. When the rule is applied in analysing such songs, they reveal the same basic *Matrika*, derived from many established themes with the same *Raga* name.

An important question may be raised regarding the validity of the method of classification proposed by Sanyal. We notice that there may be cases, where a slightly longer duration of a note compared to another note may change the dominant Matrika, or the basic class of a composition. The problem therefore is whether a very small difference between the value of two notes make any significant difference in the nature of a musical theme. Thus the question arises whether any difference in note value between two notes have to be considered relevant in determining the class of a musical theme or values within a range has to be grouped together. Let us scrutinise the different cases that may arise in determining the priority of a *Khandameru* or for that matter, the dominant *Matrika*.

Case I: When one of the notes is different between two *Khandamerus* e.g. FAC and ACE. Even a small difference in value between F and E may interchange the positions of the *Khandamerus* and it may become difficult to decide which of them should be the dominant *Khandameru*. But whichever be of higher value, the class basis remains unaffected because these two *Khandamerus* would form the dominant *Matrika* FACE. A complication arises when the dominant *Khandameru* is determined but there is a competition between two other *Kandamerus* to occupy the second position, to be determined by a small change of value of one of the notes. For example, when FAC is the dominant *Khandameru* and the two rival *Khandamerus* for the second position are ACE and DFA. A small change of value between E and D would determine whether the dominant *Matrika* be FACE or DFAC.

Case 2: When two of the notes are different between two *Khandamerus* e.g. ACE, DFA, one of which may become the dominant *Khandameru*. In this case, to affect the class character by changing the value of one note two other notes have to be of equal value.

Case 3: When all the three notes are different e.g. ACE & GED. In this case the adjustment between the other notes have to be more complicated. But it is apparent that many notes get involved in determining the priority of one of the universals.

Thus we find that changing the value of a single note is not an isolated event in determining the position of an universal. Without going into investigation of different possibilities in an abstract level, we can proceed with investigating the concrete examples of songs, arbitrarily assuming that even a fraction of a note value detectable by the ear has to be taken account of in determining the priority of a note or the *Khandemeru* comprising of the note. For finally testing the method we shall have to depend on the convention of names ascribed to the different classes and have to look for the level of correlation between the class names and dominant *Matrika* assigned to them on the basis of analysis.

The working method may be summarised as follows:

(1) Place the notes serially in the form of a scale C, D, E, F .... etc. which manifestly go to compose the particular specimen and count the note value (N. V.) of each note.

(2) Count the total value (T. V.) of all the notes, summing up the N. V. of each note

(3) Calculate the coefficient of latent value (C. L. V.) as T. V. ÷ 4 = C. L. V.

(4) Calculate the value of each *Khandameru* that can be constructed from the note values of the scale. Mediant and consonant pairs having a value greater than C. L. V. have also to be used to form *Khandamerus* with the inclusion of latent notes. Calculate the percentage value of the dominant *Khandameru*.

(5) Construct the dominant and subsidiary *Mithunas* and the corresponding *Matrikas* and count the value of the *Matrika* so formed. Calculate the percentage value of the dominant Matrika.

The result may be arranged in a tabular form in 6 columns as follows:

(1) N. V., (2) C. L. V., (3) C. V. N., (4) V. K., (5) C. V. K., (6) C V. Mithuna-Matrika.

ANALYSIS OF THE SONGS

It may be pointed out again that the notes CDEFGAB along with the flat and sharp notes comprising the 12 note scale used in the following notations do not represent the exact pitches as understood in Western Music but correspond to do, re, mi, fa so, la, ti, equivalent to the Indian notes Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni abbreviated as S, R, Ga, M, P, Da, N in the notation. The flats corresponding to R, Ga, Da, N are represented by the small letters r, g, d, n, and the sharp of M by m. The notes have in all cases been transposed in such a way that C corresponds to 'Do' or Sa in each case. The corresponding notes in the higher and lower octaves are indicated by putting a dot above and below the notes respectively. For example, if C represents middle C (S), (C ! (S) would indicate the note in the higher and (C) that in the lower octave.

I should also mention that the actual notes used in the songs may not in all cases correspond to the notes of the 12 note scale, but slightly displaced *srutis* are used by the tribals. In preparing the notations I have used the nearest notes in the 12 note scale corresponding to the *srutis* used. Since the purpose of the present analysis is to find out the common factors between the folk and classical songs, this approximation would not involve any serious error in the analysis. The deviations from the 12 note scale give some particular distinctive flavour to the tribal songs. There are individual variations in the execution of the songs by different singers, and often a tendency to move toward the notes of the 12 note scale is observed.

We begin with the simplest type of songs—Sarhul songs, sung by the tribal Bhumij, Kharia and Pahira.

I. SARHUL SONG :

Specimen 1

Word theme :

Ki phule seba laya ki phule seba
Saloi phule laya Sarhul seba

Translation :

O priest, with what flowers will you perform the worship
The priest will perform the worship with Sal flowers

Notation :

1. E — —	D C —	C C —	C C —	$\overline{DC}$ — —	C $\overline{DC}$ —	C C —	— —
Ga — —	R S —	S S —	S S —	RS — —	S RS —	S S —	— —
Ki . .	Phu le .	Se ba .	la ya .	Ki . .	Phu le —	Se ba .	. .
2. E — —	D C —	C E —	D C —	C — C	C C —	C —	— — —
Ga — —	R E —	S R —	R S —	S — S	S S —	S —	— — —
Sa . .	lo i .	Phu le .	la ya .	Sa r hu	l Se .	ba . .	. . .

--and . represent continuation of the previous note. The bar abose the notes like DC indicate equal sharing of duration between D and C on the same beat. The song is complete in two lines containing 24 beats in each line, divided in to 8 bars containing 3 beats in each bar. Only 3 notes CDE (S R Ga) are used in the song.

Distribution of note value in the successive lines of the song is given in table 1. Sum of the value of all the notes in the theme is denoted by Σ In the table and in subsequent discussion, Indian symbols will be used to designate the notes. As there is no chance of confusion with the symbols of the Western scales. 'Da' and 'Ga' will be replaced by D and G respectively.

TABLE 1

	N. V.					
Note Line	S	R	G	Σ	S+G	R
1	19	2	3	24	22	2
2	17	2	5	24	22	2
Total	36	4	4	48	44	2

TABLE 2

N. V.	C. L. V	VK	CVK	C.V Mithuna—Matrika
S — 36	48 x·4	DSG — 44	DSG, SGP } 91.7%	(DSG—SGP— SGPD 91.7%
G — 8	31.2	SGP — 44		
R — 4				
Total 48		Scale SRG (P) (D)		

The columns in table 1 give the individual note value of the different notes in the scale, and the rows represent the line of the theme. Thus to find out the duration of G in the second line, we have to read the number in column G and row 2, i.e. the No. 5. Details of distribution of succession of notes are not apparant from the chart but the emphasis of the different notes are brought into relief. It is interesting to note that although the two lines do not have exactly similar melody, the sum of note value of S and G and also value of R are the same in both the lines. The note S has the highest value and the combination SG is supposed to be emphasised in the melodic theme. In that case, what can be the role of R in the song? We know that although R is an overtone which is weak in intensity compared to G in relation to S, the frequency ratio R : S is nearer in value to S compared to that of G : S. Thus it is easier to pass to G through the step R. In the scale used in the song, only S and G are related by mediance. R is the weakest note and it is unaccompanied by any note related by mediance or consonance. Thus no *Khandarma* is manifest in the song. But we find that the combined value of S and G is greater than C. L. V. Thus we can assume that there is an unfulfilled tendency of including either D or P in the scale to complete the *Khandarmucns* DSG or SGP. No preference for either D or P as the latent note can be predicated. We shall therefore assume that both D and S are virtually present i.e., there is a tendency to complete both the *Khandamerus* DSG and SGP which generates the couple DSG - SGP. Thus the dominant *Matrika* of the above Sarhul song is assumed to be SGPD. The more important reason behind the presence of 'R' might be that 'R' as a neutral note is essential for seabilising the Matrike SGPD. The minimum requirement for completion of a *Mithuna* is the potential existence of D and P in the design. Thus the scale notes derived from the song are SRG (P) (D) including the latent notes given in parenthesis, has the possibility of generating the *raga* classes *Bhupali, Deskar* etc.

Specimen No. 2

Word theme :

Bagan barir bhitorey
Titir sinan korey dada
Gave lal mati makhey

Translation :

In the background orchard
Partridges are taking bath
Smearing their body with the red earth!

Notation :

1.	A	A	A	C	C	C	D	E	—	D	C	—
	Da	Da	Da	S	S	S	R	Ga	—	R	S	—
	Ba	ga	n	ba	ri	r	bhi	to	.	re	.	.
2.	E	E	—	C	$\overline{CR}$	F	D	C	C	C	—	—
	Ga	Ga	—	S	$\overline{SR}$	G	R	S	S	S	—	—
	Ti	ti	r	si	na	na	Ko	ray	da	da	0	0
3.	E	E	$\overline{CD}$	E	D	C	C	C	—	—	—	—
	Ga	Ga	$\overline{SR}$	G	R	S	S	S	—	—	—	—
	Ga	Ye	la	l	ma	ti	ma	khe	0	0	0	0

TABLE 3

N.V	C.L.V	V K	C.V.K	C.V.
				Mithuna—Mitrika
S—20	36×·4	SG(P)—29	DSG—89%	(DSG—SGP)—SGPD
R— 4	=14·4	DSG—32	SGP	89%
G— 9				
D— 3				
Total—36	Scale : S R G P D			

In this song the *Khandameru* DSG appears explicitly. The *Matrika* SGPD appears with the help of the latent note 'P'. The scale notes used for the composition is SRG (P) D.

Specimen No. 3

Word theme :

Ee dungri oo dungri
Pial paklo
Kari khanye re mairi
Dant gablo
Pial khanye re dada
Mon bhanglo

Translation :

The *Pial* fruits are ripe on
this hillock and that.
I took *Kari* fruit
and my teeth are tinted
I took *Pial* fruit O brother !
and my heart is broken.

Notation :

The song is complete in 6 lines, each line containing 12 beats divided as 3/3/3/3.

1.	D — D R — R Ee . dung	— C — — S — . ri .	D — D R — R 00 . dung	— C — — C — . ri .
2.	E — E Ga — pi Ga a l	D — E R — Ga pa . k	F — — M — — lo . .	E — — Ga — — . . .
3.	C C — S S — Ka ri .	E E — Ga Ga — Khan ye .	D — C R — S re . mai	— Ga — — E — . ri .
4.	D — C R — S dan . t	C — C S — S ga . b	C — — S — — lo . .	— — — — — — . . .
5.	D E — R Ga — Pi a l	F E — M Ga — khan ye .	D — C R — S re . da	— E — — Ga — . da .
6.	D — C R — S mo . n	C C — S S — dha ng .	C — — S — — lo . .	— — — — — — . . .

The distribution of the notes in the different lines are given in the following table :

TABLE 4

N. V

Note→ line	C S	D R	E Ga	F M	Σ	S+Ga	R+M
1	4	8	0	0	12	4	8
2	0	2	7	3	12	7	5
3	5	2	5	0	12	10	2
4	10	2	0	0	12	10	2
5	2	3	6	1	12	8	4
6	10	2	0	0	12	10	2
Total	31	19	18	4	72		

We notice from table 4 that there is a periodicity in the value of SG and RM in the successive lines parallel to the rhyming of the word theme.

TABLE 5

N. V.	C.V.N.	C.L.V	V.K	C.V.K.	C.V Mithuna Matrike
S—31	S		SGP—49 MDS—35 DSG—49	SGP | 68% DSG |	(DSG—SGP) =SGPD 68%
R—19	R	72x.4 =24·8			
Ga—18	Ga				
M—4	M				
Total—72		Scale	SRGMD		

The scale contains the four consecutive notes SRGM. R is comparatively strong in the sample perhaps because the supporting note M related by mediance to R is present. In this sample too, on the basis of the strength of S+G we can assume P and D to be the latent notes, forming the *Mithuna* DSG—SGP or the *Matrika* SGPD. Although the value of R is quite high, the combined value of RM is less than C. L. V. and thus the Khandamerus RMD or nRM cannot be assumed to be present. Although M is weaker than R, the strength of S gives support to the consonant combination MS, which becomes greater than CLV, and thus the *Khandameru* MDS is supposed to be present. We thus have the dominant *Mithuna* DSG—SGP and the uncoupled *Khandameru* MDS in the design. SGPD is the dominant *Matrika*. The *Khandameru* MDS is third in position. DSG and SGP are higher by 20% to MDS. The additional note 'M' appears in the scale, (P) and (D) remains latent again. The scale notes SRGM (P) (D) derived from the song has the possibility of generating *ragas* of the class represented by *Durga*.

Specimen 4

Word theme :

Khejur Khejur
Hilena dolena dada
Khejur Khejur
Girey porilo
Baney bhasilo

Translation :

The Date Palm trees
That never swing this way or that, O brother!
The Date Palm trees,
Fell down!
The Date Palm trees
Were Swept away by the flood!

Notation :

1. C — — D E — | C — — D E — |
   S — — R Ga — | S — — R Ga — |
   Khe . . ju . r | Khe . . ju . r |

2. A — A — G — | A — A — G — | F E — D C — |
   Da — Da — P — | Da — Da — P — | M Ga — R S — |
   Hi . le . na . | do . le . na . | da . . da . . |

3. C — — D E — | C — — D E — |
   S — — R Ga — | S — — R Ga — |
   Khe . . ju . r | Khe . . ju . — |

4. C C — C — C | C — —
S S — S — S | S — — — — — |
Gi rey . po ri | lo . . — — — |

5. C — — D E — | C — — D E — |
S — — R Ga — | S — — R Ga — |
Khe . . ju . r | Khe . — ju . r |

6. C C — C — C | C — — — — — |
S S — S — S | S — — — — — |
Ba ney . bha . si | lo . . . . . |

TABLE 6

N.V	C.L.V	V.K	C.V.K	C.V
				Mithuna—Matrika
S—42	31·2	SGP—61	DSG	(DSG—SGP)—SGPD
R— 8		RMD—16	—83%	87%
G—15		MDS—51	SGP	(RMD—MDS)—SRMD
M— 1		DSG—65	MDS	75%
P— 4			RMD	
D— 8				

Total—78 Scale: SRGMPD

In this song the scale notes SRGMPD appear explicitly. M and R are weak, compared to SG. The two *Matrika* SGPD and SRMD appears, SGPD having much higher value.

It is apparant that the samples of Sarhul Songs using only 3 or 4 notes have a very simple melodic movement, yet they are distinctly different from recitation of poetry and are termed as songs. In cases of poems not associated with melody, there is too much clustering of words, which do not permit adequate duration for a musical note to rest on a vowel sound, which is essential for arousing a musical sensation. Too much duration again, takes the mind away from the chain of thought associated with the word theme. In the Sarhul song, while the long duration of the notes carrying very little consonant sound gives the effect of a song, the simple poetic content remain undisturbed. Also, before standing on a note with a vowel, even within two notes, there are more ups and downs compared to that of a recitation.

(To be continued).

SANKAR SEN GUPTA

WOMEN IN ANCIENT LITERATURE AND FOLKLORE

(Continued from previous issue)

The women of Bengal wield considerable influence in society and play significant role in various walks of life.[13]

A girl in a Hindu house is taught to respect the members of the family especially the elders from her very childhood. A married woman is supposed to worship her husband like god and obey his commands. This was meant for discipline. Thus a Hindu wife is expected to be true to her husband and serve him even in the time of adversity. She was to follow her *partivrata dharma* (complete loyality and devotion to husband) and lead a very chaste life. Domestic sphere is the most important field of woman's activities in folk society. She has to grind the corn, prepare food and serve it for herself. Again she has to fetch water from the well, she has to mud-pluster the floor and sweep the house. In leisure she is found to spin for making garments. Thus her whole day is occupied with the domestic affairs which formed the usual routine.

The peculiar disability attached to our women is based on religion. Woman was temptress and was warned against religions. Still then during the periods of the Muslims and the British some women of the ruling class seem to occupy respectable positions.[14] They took active

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13. Interested readers may read H. R. Bhagat's 'Upanishads, Ten Principals, Edited with Sankara's Commentary, Poona, 1918; *Therigatha*, Eng. trans by Mrs. Rhys Davids, London, 1909; *Ancient India*, as described by Megasthenes and Arrain, Trans. by M. Crindle, London, 1877; J. L. Devidas's *A short history of women*, London, 1928; G. D. Banerji's *Hindu Law of Stridhana*, Calcutta, 1923; Steele's *Law and custom of Hindu castes*, Tripathi's *Marriage Froms under Hindu Law*, Bombay, 1906 and others referred to in the notes and selected bibliography.

14. Mishra, Rekha, *Women in Mughal India*, (based on a thesis approved by the University of Allahabad for D. Phil. in 1965) Munshi Ram, Delhi, 1957.

parts in politics. Seclusion was not practised strictly in the beginning but started growing after the tenth or eleventh century. Some of the ladies took keen interest in intellectual sphere but it appears they were not much encouraged. Then, political disability was defined biologically and became the basis of economic and social disabilities. The object of all these were to prevent women to mingle with men in public affairs. The prejudices persisted even after the advancement of time.

The field of fine-arts specially attracted the attention of the women-folk from the earliest time and the art of music and dance was fairly popular among them. Some of them became the leaders of fashion. These came from satisfaction and pleasures in life and also attach to her special position in the society. Even amidst the great turmoil which was taking place in Western Asia during the eleventh century, the Indian women continued to be an object of care, adoration and chivalry. The traditions, customs, and practices, which were brought into this country by the Turks, were followed by the royalty, noblity and the Turkish soldiers. In course of time there went through modifications and changes under the impact of indegenous condition.

The females by nature are lovers of beauty, of the body. Though the inscriptions are silent on this point but sculptures, images and paintings have much to say about this subject. The examination of early mediaeval images reveal that cloth represent the costumes of the people in general. From the early period Indian women had started wearing *sari* and they covered upper part of their body with *angiya* (bodice) when a great many people of the other parts of the world did not use that. It suggests that the people of India were more civilised from the earliest time. They used long *dupatta* (scarf) of different types when they moved out of their houses. In Northern and Western Indian *Lahanga* (long skirt) was often worn by ladies.

It is also known that *kanchuk* and *chole* (blouse) were used by women. They changed their dresses according to the changing seasons. Ornaments were fairly popular among the ancient women. They adorned themselves with flowers and jewels. The ornaments commonly used were *shishphul* or *sikhapasa* (worn on forehead), ear-rings, bangles garlands, etc It appears that nose-ring was unknown throughout the Hindu period. The ornaments were usually made of gold, silver and various stones. Even poor women used ornaments made of generally ivory, brass and glass.

Beside ornaments, women paid great attention to their toilets. They used cosmetics of various kinds such as sandal paste mixed with saffron. They plaited their hair in different styles and used flowers and

ornaments to decorate them. Hair was combed in broad plaits or loose tresses. They applied collyrium in their eyes. They also put vermilion on their forehead and decorate their faces. On lips, on the tips of their fingers, toes and palm etc.they used different types of dyes and oinments. They were also taught dancing and vocal instrumental music. The traditional liturature and texts again and again assort that dancing, singing and fine arts are to be practised by women.

The dancing girls do not figure in Jatakas and is not mentioned by the Chinese travellers. We may, therefore, presume that the custom was not common till about 6th century A.D. On the architectural evidence its origin may be traced back to nineth century. These dancing girls degenerated into women of easy virtue. An indirect reference of dancing girl is found in the Devapara record of Vijayasena (1095-1158 A.D.) of Sena family. It has been recorded in the Bhuvaneswar inscription (twelfth century A.D.) that there were female attendents (dancing girls) to temples. Thus, it becomes clear that such practice continued in the Northern India till twelfth century A.D. The *devadasi* custom was prevalent in Kathiwar and the number of girls attached to the temple reached high proposition. The temple of Somnath at the time of its destruction by Muhammad Ghori, is said to have served by 350 girls. In Gujarat, twenty thousand girls were serving, singing and offering flowers to the deity. Alberuni told that the lined maintained this institution was a source of attraction to the people thus an income. They met the expenses of army out of the revenue derived there from.

It is also found that during the period of 700-1200 A.D. higher education of women in royal, official and rich families and to the class of dancing girls were in order. Some women were attracted by medical studies and a treatise on subject was written by a lady-doctor, Rosa, which was translated in the eighth century A.D. into Arabic at the order of Khalifa Haruna (Nadvi-Arab Aur Bharat ke Sambandha—112). Girls of ruling families used to receive administrative training. We learn from legends of the mediaeval coinage the names of the queens Sugandha and Didda of Kashmir, Semaladevi of Rajaputana and many upper class women of Bengal who took part in the administration and the type works.

Let us not forget here that the Indian concept of womenhood is basically different from that of the west. The westerners look and regard women as their partners in life. As such they want to qualify them as their best helpers in all walks of life. But Indians regard women, not merely as partners, but as mother. Motherhood is the highest fulfilment of Indian womanhood. So they need that sort of education

which will help them of become ideal housewives, affectionate and competent mothers.

During the medieval period practically the female education in India received a great setback mostly due to early marriage of the girls. During this period the security of the womenfolk was not there. So parents or the guardians were eager somehow to get their daughters married. But then also the ladies of cultured families in the towns continued to get certain training and they adopted themselves with the situation according to the changing climate. It is hazardous to make any statement about the extent of literacy among women in those days but something can be said taking the help of distinguished epigraphists who gleaned from the study of epigraphs that the women of the upper castes were not illeterates. Capriciousness is said to be the trait of the women of the towns and the city damsels indulged intoxicating drugs and sensual excess. The general education was necessary in the society to acquaint the women with system of household works and religious function performed by their husbands.

With the advent of Muslims, due to the insecurity and uncertainty which prevailed, the position of common women further received a set-back. *Purdah* became rigid, child-marriages were fairly common and *jauhar* and *sati* were practiced by the womenfolk of the upper castes in Hindu society. Sometimes, even the Muslim women preferred *jauhar*. Further, Firoz Tughlaq and Sikander Lodi restricted the freedom of women by forbiding their visit to holy shrines and religious centres. It cannot be denied that men and women differ in their outlook upon life, upon relative values which they set upon different sections and principles. We are not suggesting that in any direction men are superior to women. On the contrary, our intention is to draw a correct and unbaised picture of Indian women.

The present position and status of Indian women is largely due to the result of earnest endeavour for more than a hundred years on the part of social reformers, educators and political leaders. Then with the advent of machines, the women are emerging in a new role. The rising cost of living has made it necessary for able women to take to some form of employment in order to supplement family income. Among the masses, women have always had to earn their livlihood and they had always taken part in agricultural labour both as part time and full time or other works. Now that the political and social freedom have been granted so liberally to our women that they have attained such position and powers that they deserved. Still then, they are physically handicapped to undertake heavier works.

It will not be out of place to mention here that the modern India

owes her existence to a revolution against the foreign rule of the British and to a revolution against her own past. The past appeared as the whole traditional system of Indian caste and family life; they had to attack the British, but defended the traditional past such as *sati,* child marriage, etc. which the British attacked, or at least endangered. Thus, there developed a typically Indian nationalist outlook which is a bar to know the truth about the life and living of the people historically. Then, there came vested interests, political pressures, which again stand the way of true historians. The people, inspite of giving their judgments like judges, pleaded through their works as barristers for the superiority of their culture, men and women, for their personal satisfaction or sectarian gains.

From the data we have collected from various sources we can say that the contemporary Indian women do not want to become just housewives. They are interested in remaining independent and economically self sufficient. So the working women are not willing to get out of their jobs after marriage and their having no necessity for the jobs in some cases.

Although according to Hindu idea a girl, a young woman or a matron must do nothing for her own pleasure, even in her own dwelling place. It is clearly stated in Hindu texts that in childhood, she is dependent on her father, in youth on her husband, in widowhood on her sons; if she has no sons, she must depend upon the kinsmen of her deceased husband; if he left no kinsman, she must be dependent upon the kinsmen of her father; if she has no such kinsman, she must be dependent upon the Reya. A woman must never seek to be independent; she must neyer wish to seperate herself from her father, her husband, her sons, for by such a seperation, she exposes both her father's family and her husband's family which is a sin according to the Hindu view of life.

Folklore of women

It is said that women is concerned with her home and children and she is essentially timid and superstitious. Her speech is comparatively speaking, more conservative than that of man; she retains archaic feature in her dialects and avoid neologisms as far as she can. "Women's vocabulary contains a very large number of intensive words and emphatic particles as well as pejorative—Euphemism is one of the great characterestic of women's speech. . . But women's vocabulary is much more limited than that of men. They are content with old

vocabulary and avoid coming of fresh words."[15] These can be illustrated with examples. Now we will relate some sayings.[16] A woman says on her worthless husband :

Abujhke bojhabo kato bojh nahi mane
Dhenkeke bojhabo kato nitya dhan bane.

This means, how long should I explain a thing to one who would not understand : how long should I expostulate with the husking machine. It would go on husking paddy for ever, or *darbare na pai thai ghare ashe maag kilai,* which means, not finding an opportunity to speak at the court, he comes home and beats his wife. Then, she says aiming at neighbours, *parsi nai barsi* which means, no neighbour. but an angling hook. Then being disgusted on her son a mother says :

Chandra surya asta gelo jonakir ponde bati
bistar karle peter pute ki karbe mor nati

the meaning of this is the sun and the moon are down and light at the tail of fireflies ; much has indeed been done by my own son ; what can a grandson do now ? She also says *jatai karo sivsadhana, kalankini nam jabena,* means however much you may worship Lord Siva, your ill fame as an unchaste woman would not be wiped out. Hence it is necessary for every women to be chaste and an ideal one. She should not commit such work by which she can earn a bad name or ill reputation.

Enormous folklore material in English translations on the position of Indian women in general are available especially in the periodical writings. But most of these excellent materials are free translations where there are no original texts and in many cases such translations do not give a correct picture of the imagery and the stylistic catches which are so important for providing the continuity in the tradition as also

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15. Sen, Sukumar, op. cit.

16. অবুঝকে বোঝাবো কত, বোঝ নাহি মানে।
ঢেঁকিকে বোঝাবো কত, নিত্য ধান বানে।।
যতই কর শিব-সাধনা কলঙ্কনী নাম যাবে না।
দরবারে না পাই ঠাঁই ঘরে এসে মার কিলাই।
পড়শী নয় বড়শী।
চন্দ্র সূর্য্য অস্ত গেল, জোনাকির পোঁদে বাতি।
বিস্তর করলে পেটের পুতে কি করবে মোর নাতি।।
যতই কর বোঝাপড়া তবু যাবে না জাতের ধারা।

the new borrowings. Further, to explain folklore and the traditions without paying any heed to the original texts is a risk for misquote and wrong explanation. The specialisation demands the preservation and presentation of the original texts along with the translations and topical allusions. Here exactly the field of Indian researches become more precise and his task more difficult as he endeavours to give interpretations. This requires a fair acquaintance with history, sociology, ethnology, linguistics and religion.[17] It is obvious that an analytical approach to the subject matter requires a careful selection also. We will treat a few selected folklore items to describe the position of Indian women in general whose characterestic peculiarity has been very correctly said by Govindadasa in the following line—to my beloved (or a woman) *nakahile mari, kahile khenkari*,[18] which means, I die if I do not speak out, and if I speak out I shall get a blame. From this habit of the womenfolk they have developed their own folklore, they have expressed the subjective and objective conditions of their lives and living, joys, pleasures, sorrows, pangs of seperations, pains, conflicts so on and so forth in their own dialects.

It has been observed by a large number of scholars that physically man is a hunted animal, but the use of weapons makes him the most powerful animal and also makes his struggle against other species easier. The quarrels that a man has in a family over the possession of female can be avoided by prohibiting incest, but in a kin or protective group which consists of different families, it becomes necessary that the union of husband and wife of each family must be recognised and respected by the members of other families, to maintain the solidarity of the kin and protective group. Thus, man has to be conceived not only as a living being in the family, kin and protective group, but he should have a language, culture, tradition, heritage and beliefs. In spite of these common elements man has been divided in innumerable groups occupying the entire inhabitable surface of the earth each group is struggling against the other groups of man's species, observing incest prohibition and having some kind of system of marriage. This is why they have seen their women in a variety of way. To satisfy his need man has attributed the following qualities to the womenfolk according to the Hindu idea.

Every man thinks of future and wants to build up society for tomorrow; from certain beliefs about the ultimate resting of the world,

17. See Bhagvat, Durga's *The Riddle in Indian Life, Lore and Literature*, Bombay, 1965.

18. না কহিলে মরি, কহিলে থেঁকারী (গোবিন্দ দাস)

life and that of society and he pins his faith in them. With his faith he feels stronger to face odds in his life. When he meets with failures and frustrations he conceales himself in his faith. Thus faith is a system of beliefs regarding nature, life and society. It gives mental strength and satisfaction. With this idea it is said about the Hindu women that (i) the mouth of a woman is always pure (V, 130); (ii) women must be honoured and adorned by their fathers, husbands, brothers and brothers-in-law, who desire their own welfare (111,55); (iii) where women are honoured, there the *Devas* (Gods) are pleased; but where they are dishonoured, no sacred rite yields rewards (111,56), (iv) where female relations live in grief, the family soon wholly perished; but that family where they are not unhappy ever prospers (111, 57); (v) in the like manner, care must be taken of barren women, of those who have no sons, of those whose family is extinct, of wives and widows faithful in their lords, and of women afflicted with diseases (VIII, 28); (vi) a righteous king must punish like thieves those relatives who appropriate the property of such females during their lifetime (VIII, 29); (vii) in order to protect women and Brahmins, he who kills anybody, causes right and commits no sin, (VIII, 349); (viii) one's daughter is the highest object of tinderness, hence if one is offended by her one must bear it without resentment (IV, 185); (ix) a maternal aunt, the wife of a maternal uncle, a mother-in-law and a parental aunt must be honoured like the wife of one's spiritual teacher, they are equal to the wife of one's father and of one's mother but the mother is most venerable than they (11, 133); (x) but the teacher is ten times more venerable than the sub-teacher the father a hundred times more than a teacher, but the mother a thousand times more than the father, (11, 145); (xi) a chaste wife, who after the death of her husband constantly remains chaste, reaches heaven though she has no son, just like those chaste women (V, 160); (xii) in that family where the husband is pleased with his wife and the wife with her husband, happiness will assuredly be lasting (111, 60); (xiii) offspring, the due performance of religious rites, faithful service, highest conjugal happpiness, and heavenly bliss from the ancestors and one's self depend upon the wife along, (IX, 28); (xiv) let mutual fidelity continue till death; this may be considered as a summary of the highest law for husband and wife (IX, 101).[19]

The acceptance of the womenfolk with such positions are nowhere found in Western idea. Their women are treated as a sex partner who according to a modern singer-composer, "I do not think women

19. Swami Abhedananda *India and his People*, Ramkrishna Vedanta Math, Calcutta.

help men to be stable. They always take more than they give. They oblige us to give them everything and if we agree, we find ourselves poor, drained out. They are physically much stronger than us, we do not satisfy them anymore, and off they go after some one else. They give us many things but not the stability."[20] This is not the conception of a Hindu about a woman which we have discussed in earlier pages. On the contrary, a Hindu believes that it is the woman who gives man stability and peace of mind if she is honest, chaste, cheerful and dutiful. She is always pure. In order to clarify Hindu points of view we have collected and compiled some data from oral traditional and ancient sources. They are potent enough to depict the position of women faithfully and to draw a meaningful generalisation from them is possible. Further instructions may also be quoted from the Hindu law-books about the Hindu women. It is said there,
(a) women are pure in all limbs: (b) man is strength, women is beauty, he is the reason that governs and she is the wisdom that moderates; (c) he who despises woman despises his mother; (d) the tears of woman call down the fire of heaven on those who make them flow; (e) he who is cursed by a woman is cursed by God; (f) evil to him who laughs at a woman's sufferings, God shall laugh at his prayers; (g) the songs of women are sweet in the ears of the Lord, men should not, if they wish to be heard, sing the praise of God without women; (h) there is no crime more adieus than to persecute women, and to take advantage to their weakness to despoil them of their partimony; (i) the woman watches over the house, and the protecting divinities (*Devas*) of the domestic hearth are happy in her presence; the labours of the field should never be assigned to her; (j) when relatives, by some subterfuge, take possession of property of a woman, her carriages or her jewels, such evil dooer shall descend into the infernal regions. Here is a definition of a wife that has been given in the Mahabharata;

A wife is half the man, his truest friend;

A loving wife is a perpetual spring of Virtue, Pleasure, and Wealth,

A faithful wife is his best aid in seeking heavenly bliss;

A sweetly-speaking wife is the companion in solitude, a father in advice, a mother in all seasons of distress, a rest in passing through life's wilderness.

If we turn to Brahminic age we find that polyandry and *sayamvara* are alike ignored by Manu and so too in the sentiment that woman is

20. Singout, New York, 1968.

in anyway equal to the man. Manu says, "Women were created to be mother, and men to be father; it is there, ordained in the Veda, that religious rites should be performed by the husband together with the wife." But in every other direction the subordination of women is indicated. The duties of husband towards their wives are defined with significant fullness of details in folklore materials. In a folk sayings it is said that a married woman must be honoured and be adorned by everybody, if they would obtain abundant prosperity. A woman must always be in cheerful temper, devoting herself to the good management of the household, taking great care of the household furniture and children, keeping down all her expenses and educating her offsprings for fitting them in the world of living. Regarding the marriage of daughter Manu says, "Every man should give his daughter in marriage to an excellent man, youth of the same caste, even though she has not attained her age; but it is better that a damsel, though marriageable should stay at home until her death, rather than that her father should give her in marriage to a worthless bridegroom." Popular folksayings clarify the idea. For example, *anna dekhe debe ghee patro dekhe debe jhee*[21] which means, look for fine boiled rice before you serve ghee; find out a suitable bridegroom before you marry your daughter or *dasaputra sama kannya putra bujhee dele,* a daughter is equal to ten sons if she is married to a suitable bridegroom and so on. Again Manu says that a damsel may wait for 3 years after she is marriageable; and then if her father has not given her in marriage, she may choose herself a bridegroom of equal caste, when neither she nor her chosen husband commits any offence by that. But folk society has not accepted it so easily. There are a great many folk sayings where such marriages are condemned such as *bhat pai na bhatar chai, theke theke abar gayna chai,* she gets no meal but wishes for a husband, and from time to time she longs for jewellery as well or *adarbibir chadar gai bhat pai na, bhatar chai,*[22] dama love has a veil on her person; she goes without food but longs for a husband. From the hankering if she gets married the folk people do not mind to taunt her with the following saying *baap jane na, ma jane na hogal bane biye,* unknown to the parents she is being married in a swamp of reeds.

21. অন্ন দেখে দেবে ঘি, পাত্র দেখে দেবে ঝি।
দশপুত্র সম কন্যা পাত্র দেখে দিলে।

22. ভাত পায়না ভাতার চায়, থেকে থেকে আবার গয়না চায়।
আদর বিবির চাদর গায়, ভাত পায় না ভাতার চায়।
বাপ জানে না, মা জানে না, হোগল বনে বিয়ে।
ভাতার পেয়েই কত নয়, কাচের চুড়ি চায়।

The wife is considered to be a partaker and a partner in the spiritual life of her husband; she is thus called in Sanskrit, *sahadharmini*, "spiritual helpmate". This idea is very old and as old as Hindu nation and it still stands good. It is true that in course of time certain prohibition for some women against certain studies and ceremonies were prescribed. But when the western historians say that the Hindu women are treated like slaves by their husbands and other elders they say that without considering the other side of the Hindu way of life in its correct perspective.

Indeed the position of women, as revealed in *Dharmasutra* is somewhat peculiar. On the one hand, she is regarded as ever pure, all her impurities being removed by her monthly illness; while on the other, she has no higher status than the chattles belonging to the household.[23] According to Dharmashastras the observance of fast by a woman whose husband is alive, has been condemned most vehimently. Some have included women in the list of properties which are not lost by reason of their being enjoyed by others. Bodhayana declares that the wife is even more precious than wealth and as such, deserves more careful protection.

Then there is definite instruction as to how a wife might be abondoned. Following descriptions might abandon a wife :—

(a) barren in the 10th year of marriage;
(b) bearing daughters only in 12 years;
(c) all of whose children die in the 15 years;
(d) uttering unpleasant words forthwith.

It has been suggested that a married lady should have great regard for her superiorus, particularly mother-in-law, father-in-law, and the husband. She must be reverential towards Gods and guests, she should keep the house in order, and lead a life of chastity and restraint. The housewife must have saving habit and be careful about the articles for domestic use. Practice of *Nulakriya*, decoration of ornament, and going to the house of strangers during the absence of husband are among the practices prohibited for a woman. Besides there are a certain taboos which we will see later, that she should practice as faithfully as possible.

It is said that a widow shall avoid during one year, or according to some six months only from her becoming a widow, the use of honey,

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23. Banerjee, S. C. Dharmasutra—a study in their origin and development, Calcutta, 1962

meat, spirituous liquor and salt and shall sleep on the ground. She or a woman who has no son may engage her *devara* for raising a son on herself. In the absence of *devara* she can utilise a person of the same caste. This *devara* or the husband's younger brother has a very sweet relation with his *bauthan*. It is equally popular in folk society which we known from the following song : *soner deora benche thak, deora more karlo pagal pran sahe na*,[24] Oh beloved younger brother of my husband, let you live long because it is you who have made me mad, I am unable to bear your gap.

In Aittereya Brahman (XII, 12, and XV, 3) it is said that man can have many wives but no woman can have more than one husband. This is the first authorative statement of polygamy, which was common enough during the Vedic period. This passage is very freely quoted in the later Smritis as a form of polygamy or *bahu bibaha*. This has affected a great many girls. This also brings conflicts such as *khete khete marlo dorani hat nere parsul sorani*,[25] the neglected queen dies hard work, while the beloved queen has given birth to an infant by sheer waving hands. Another saying, *ek barer stri heladola, dojbarer stri galarmala*, the first and the only wife of a man is not much cared for, but the second wife of a man is prized like a wreath of flower. So when a girl gets unhappy for marrying her to an old groom it is said, *gouri lo jhee tor kapale buro bar aami karbo ki*, O Gauri the daughter, it is loted to you for an old groom, what shall I do? This polygamy had wide sanction thus the king, it appears, had three kinds of wives with their distinctive appellation. The best kind was designed as *mahishi*.

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24. সোনার দেওরা বেঁচে থাক—
দেওরা মোরে করলে পাগল প্রাণ সহে না।

25. খেটে খেটে ম'ল দোরাণী, হাত নেরে পর'ল সোরাণী।

এক বরের স্ত্রী হেসা দোলা, দোজবরের স্ত্রী গলার মালা।

এক বরের ভাতারের মাগ চিংড়িমাছের খোসা।
দোজবরের ভাতারের মাগ নিত্যি করেন গোসা॥
তেজবরের ভাতারের মাগ সঙ্গে বসে খায়।
চার বরের ভাতারের মাগ কাঁধে চ'ড়ে যায়॥

গৌরী লো ঝি, তোর কপালে বুড়ো বর আমি করব কি?
—বাংলা প্রবাদ।

টাকা ভেঙে শঙ্খ দিলাম, কানে মদন-কড়ি।
বিয়ের বলা দেখে এলুম বুড়োর চাপ দাড়ি॥
চোখ খাও গো বাপ মা, চোখ খাও গো খুড়ো,
এমন বরকে বিয়ে দিলে তামাক-খেগো বুড়ো॥
বুড়োর হুঁকো গেল ভেঙে, বুড়ো মরে কেশে,
কেন গালিবার সময়, বুড়ো নেচে উঠেছে॥

Polygamy although sanctioned by law was prevalent mostly amongst the kings and the wealthier classes in those days besides the *kulins*. Some working people were polygamous too due to economic factor. These people utilised their wives as their helping hands in the working grounds.

Superstitions, taboos, beliefs and customs

In the following pages we will discuss some proverbs, sayings etc. which depict the position of the folk women in particular and Bengali folk women in general. Some facts about the Bengalee kinship taboos are given under : Foremost among the Bengalee kinship taboos are the elder brother-in-law (*Bhasur*) and the maternal-uncle-in-law (*Mamasasur*) taboos. These two types of kins are tabooed to a Bengalee wife and perhaps, to a wife of other Hindu communities A housewife of Bengal must carefully avoid them. She must not show her face to them, or touch them, or speak to them, or utter their names or appear before them On the other hand, the elder-brother-in-law or the maternal-uncle-in-law must not look at her face or touch her or speak to her except through an intermidiary. They must indicate their approach by some method or other so as to permit of decorous adjustment of her clothes or to give time to conceal herself in a corner.[26] In fact, there is complete inhibition of social intercourse between them. This is also true for the womenfolk of other regions of India which are evident from her regional folklore. Needless to mention that a hoast of scholar has stated that these are the primitive traits in culture They corroborated their statements by concrete illustrations. Thus, a housewife of a peasant family addressing the elder brother of her husband says,

Rangila Bhasurgo tumi keno deyor haila na
tumi jadi haita re deyor khaita batar pan
(aar) ranga rase kaitam katha juraito paran

Hate jao bazare jao amar ekti katha
(ai) didir laigya pan supari amar alapata[27] etc.

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26. Bagchi, Prabodh Kumar "Female Folk-Rites in Bengal", Man-in-India, 1922

27. রঙিলা ভাসুর গো, তুমি কেন দেওর হইলা না—
তুমি যদি হইতা রে দেওর, খাইতা বাটার পান।
(আর) রঙ্গ রসে কইতাম কথা, জুড়াইত পরাণ গো জুড়াইত পরাণ।
হাটে যাও বাজারে যাও আমার একটি কথা,
(ঐ) দিদির লইগ্যা পান সুপারী, আমার আলাপাতা। (পল্লীগীতি ও পূর্ববঙ্গ ,

It means, the sportive elder brother of my husband why you were not his younger one instead of his being the elder. If you were his younger brother, you could have take betel from my stock, we could have engaged in amorous play and joke by each other and I could have satisfy my thirst and be pleased. Oh dear elder brother of my husband, wherever you go either in the *haat* or in the market, please bring for me tobacco and for your wife betel and betel nut.

This speaks as to how owing to husband's elder brother taboo the peasant woman inspite of her sincere love for the elder-brother-in-law is unable to expose herself to him. So she is taking the shelter of a curious song while talking to him. Similarly, some Andamani Islanders show a great deal of shyness in the presence of his younger brother's wife who is known as *bhadrabadhu* in Bengal. *Bhadrabadhus* should never communicate with their *bhasurs* except through an intermediary. This is also true in the tribal and caste people of India including Yokaghirs, a Sibarian tribe among whom there are rules forbiding conversation between the elder brother and the younger brother's wife. This taboo is also found among the Bihrors. Here is a saying where a housewife of a middle-class Hindu Joint-family addressing the wife of her husband's elder brother says, *ki balbo bhasur ghare, naile tor chele mor chele mare* ?[28] meaning what shall I do now, the elder brother of my husband is at home, or how dare your son to beat my son.

As because it is a taboo to speak before the elder brother of her husband she is tolerating his son who has beaten her own son. Being unable to check herself she has expressed that clearly and getting angried had lodged a complaint to her *ja* (husband's elder brother's wife). This is a very good illustration of the character of folk women. Necessary to mention that due to this taboo usually housewives have more feelings for their *devars* which can also be understood from the following sayings :

ato kalai bhate chotthakurer pate
ato dal diyeche bhate tabu nai bat-thakurer pate[29]

which means so much boild lentils, all in the plate of my husband's younger brother ; so much boiled lentils yet none in the plate of (her) husband's elder brother.

It is obvious. Since Vedic days Hindu women are allowed to keep pleasant relations with their *devars* when it is a taboo to talk freely with *bhasurs*. Naturally, faults are thick where love is thin. Inspite

28. কি বলব ভাসুর ঘরে, নইলে তোরে ছেলে মেরে ছেলে যারে ? (বাংলা প্রবাদ)।
29. অত কলাই ভাতে ছোট ঠাকুরের পাতে।
অত ডাল দিয়েছি ভাতে, তবু নেই বট ঠাকুরের পাতে।

of taboos, sometime the wife of the younger brother need to talk to her *bhasur*. Here is an example of the conversation between the wife of the younger brother with husband's elder brother. Addressing the wall of the house she says the following words: *Kathkhan kathkhan battharkur ki pakal mash khan.*[30] Hallow the wall of the house, can you tell me whether the elder brother of my husband eat big fish ? The reply is *Khan khan khan, panch chhay khan, ekhan ektu tel pele naite jan.* Yes, he would like to take five to six pieces of fish but prior to that he would be pleased if he gets some oil for taking bath.

To a Hindu wife it is not only the names of her husband's elder brothers and maternal uncles are tabooed, but the names, of almost all of her husband's elder kin irrespective of their sexes are tabooed. She must not utter the name of her husband. If there be any occasion to mention his name she must either alter the intial letter of the name of her husband or paraphrase it. Thus if the name is *Kali* she must either change the name to *Nali, Tali, Bali,* etc. or use some such synonym as Syama, another name of the Goddess Kali. This name taboo is observed with such rigorous consistency that she will not utter any word which approaches the name in sound. Thus the wife will not say *Kal* meaning tomorrow or yesterday but will either pronounce it *Nal* or resort to some other means to indicate it (e.g. the day before today or the day after to day).

Now we come to son-in-law's house taboo. According to this taboo a Bengalee mother-in-law must not visit her son-in-law's house till he gets his offspring. But this taboo does not involve any repture of social intercourse with the family of the son-in-law and the mother-in-law. He will behave towards her exactly in the same way as he behaves towards his own mother. The mother-in-law too behave with his son-in-law as her own son.[31]

Then there are superstitions about the concealment of name. Here is a Sycilian legend where we know that Rozella, a woodcutter's daughter marries the God of love, who become bird during the day time and a man at night. Rozella insists on knowing the name of her husband. The husband requests him not to insist on the same because once the name is divulged it would lead to misery and destruction. Still she is not satisfied. Ultimately he tells his name to her and disappears. From this incident she began to suffer from proverty and lonliness all her life.[32] There is a Konkan variant of the same legend which goes thus :

30. কাথখান কাথখান—বট ঠাকুর কি পাকাল মাছ খান ?
—খান খান খান, পাঁচ ছয়খান, এখন একটু তেল পেলে নাইতে যান।
31. Bagchi, Prabodh Kumar op. cit.
32. Bhagvat, Durga, op. cit.

A princess got married to a stranger, a prince. She insists on knowing his name. He did not want to divulge his name for obvious reason but on her insistance he tells her that his name is Nagadeva. As soon as he utters his name he assumes the cobra-form and disappears under the ground. The girl repents and prays to God for being united with her husband. She ultimately got the boon and was able to unite with her husband as a female-snake. The custom of not uttering the name of the serpent at night is current throughout India. It can also be found in the Kathasaritsagar that prince Vajramukha falls in love with Padmavati at first sight and wants to know her name and whereabouts. Padmavati reciprocates his feelings. She expresses her thoughts by gestures. She puts a lotus on her ear, thereby showing that her name is Padmavati and her country is Karnatak (ear is *karna*). She then holds the flower in between her teeth, indicating thereby that her father's name is Dantaghataker. (teeth means *danta*). But she never speaks to about her name and whereabouts.[33] From all these one can easily understand that generally no husband or wife of Hindu society calls each other by name.

There are, however, certain occasions when they are forced by female relations to break the taboo by way of jokes and in that cases they pray to God for His execusing them. In the western districts of the northern India young married women go on the festivals of the Salon and Tij to a tank to worship there. When they have done the worship, some old women seized a young wife by the nose and threatens to rub it until she mentions her husband's name. Many will stand the pain than to submit ; but if a young bride complies, she is laughed at, but does not incur any serious reproach for this occassion only. The reason is that the taboo is broken in the immediate presence of the water deities, who are more disposed to lengthen than to shorten the life of the husband of a woman who worships them. Then in Gorakhpur (Uttar Pradesh) on the day of *Govardhan Puja,* in the month of Kartik (Oct.-Nov.), while worshipping the cow-dung image of Govardhan women name each other of their male relations, including their husbands. Each name is uttered with some abusive epithet. But the name of the husband is mentioned only in a whisper, without many insulting phrase.[34] Tamil women are reluctant to mention their husband's name. The custom is not only confined to Tamil society but also is observed more or less by almost all the Hindu inhabitants of India and Ceylon. (*Continued*)

33. Tawney, C. H. The Kathasaritsagara, or the Ocean of the Streams of Story, 2 vols. reprinted by Munshiram Moholiarlal, Delhi, 1968.

34. North Indian Notes and Querries, ed. W. Crooke & Punjab Notes and Querries, 1882

PRAPHULLADATTA GOSWAMI

FOLKTALES OF THE MIRIS

LIKE other peoples of Assam Miris too have interesting folktales. As some of the Miris have retained a rather close community life, myths and explanatory tales still play a clear role in either determining their attitude towards the unseen and seen worlds or in controlling their beliefs and activity. Some of their beliefs find echoes among other plainsmen of the land. For instance, it is a widespread belief that if one takes away a fish caught by a fish-eagle one is likely to lose a son. Miris explain the origin of the belief in this manner : In olden days God decided to make the fish-eagle king over all birds. So he asked the bird to observe a fast of two days. It failed to keep the fast. So God cursed the bird. "You will get a fish to eat only if you keep a fast of twelve days." The crestfallen fish-eagle said, "If someone snatches away the fish I catch at the end of twelve days, I'll have to starve. What'll I do then ?" God said, "I can't revoke my curse, but if anyone takes away the fish you catch, he will lose his son."

This myth has a sequel, in a test taken by God in order to find a bird fit to be king. God prepared a cauldron of boiling oil and said, "Whichever bird is able to take a dip in the oil would be considered for the kingship." While the other birds delayed taking the test, the slim drongo swooped into the oil and flew out proving its competence to be king. Because the bird took a bath in boiling oil it turned black, but it now is so bold that it even pursues larger birds like crows and kites and drives them off. An Assamese proverbial saying which refers to a person who is irresolute or who shilly-shallies, goes somewhat like this : "Ah, while you did up and dressed, the drongo has already become king." The tale has an Ao Naga analogue.

This tale explains why the drongo is black ; certain other tales explain why human beings do not see the gods, why monkeys live in jungles, why swine live under their raised houses while dogs live in them (this has Ao Naga and Wancho parallels), why leeches and mosquitoes suck human blood, why Miris have no letters, and so on. The myth explaining how Miris lost their letters has an Abor version, indicating that Miris and Abors have certain things in common. It has also parallels among Garos and certain tribes in South-east Asia. Daying Ba-bu, the god of wisdom, gave to human beings speech and then

asked them to take the letters with which they could write down their speech. The ancestor of the Miris took down the letters on a deerskin. He kept the deerskin in the loft and forgot all about it. Much later, one day when he had nothing to eat, he took down the skin, roasted it in the fire and ate it up. Thus the letters were lost. The Mois of Annam explain their illiteracy in this manner: "When the Great Spirit told all the nations to bring writing materials, on which the alphabets would be inscribed, the Mois, with typical improvidence, instead of providing tablets of stone or even wood, turned up with a piece of deerskin, which later, complete with alphabet, was eaten up by the dogs." (N. Lewis, A Dragon *Apparent,* p. 89).

All over India we find animal tales in which one animal tries to outwit another. The fox figures prominently in such tales, for instance, in the Assamese "The Fox and the Monkey". In a Kachari tale the place of the fox is occupied by a hare. The hare is tricked by a monkey and the latter is also triked by the no less clever hare. Certain motifs in the Miri tale "The Monkey and the Tiger" recall parts of the Assamese and Kachari parallels. In the Miri tale the monkey eats up some fruits and gives his friend the tiger only the peels. So the tiger invites him to get some honey from a beehive on a tall tree. The bees bite the intruder and he drops down in a miry place. As he cannot get out of the mire the monkey entreats the tiger thus, "I am sorry for what I did to you. Please save me now. Instead of allowing me to die here in the mire you as well take me out and eat me." The tiger takes him at his word and wants to eat him, but he says, "I'm muddy all over, why not get me washed?' When he is washed and cleaned he says, "Let me dry my body in the sun while you go to that village, get some fire so that you can roast me, have a tasty meal." As the tiger leaves for the village, the monkey climbs up a tree and escapes.

In the second part of the Kachari tale the monkey is saved by a tiger, but the tiger there is cleverer, for when the monkey escapes to a tree, the tiger feigns death and lies on the ground unmoving. The monkey finding his enemy dead dances and puts his head into the open jaws of the apparently dead tiger, who suddenly closes his mouth.

Formula tales are rather few in Assam. In such tales the form is fixed, one incident following close on another according to a set pattern. The incidents go on accumulating till the climax, then there is a turning back to the earlier incidents. "Why the back of the toad is full of warts" is a formula tales. It can be summarised in this manner: Once noon a bat was eating seeds in a tree. A frog suddenly croaked and frightened it. The bat flew away and frightened a squirrel who was nibbling at the berry of a palm. The squirrel ran away and a berry

dropped on a barking deer. The frightened barking deer ran away knocked off a bamboo. The bamboo hit a crab and broke its leg. In severe pain the crab moved away and bit off the tail of a snake. In pain the snake rushed up to the nest of a tailor bird and ate up its eggs. The weeping tailor bird approached the public to give it justice. So all came and sat in an assembly. The snake was hauled up, but it said, "I am blameless. It is because the crab bit off my tail that I ate up the tailor bird's eggs." So the crab was brought up. In this way the incidents are gone over backwards and ultimately the crime is placed on the shoulder of the frog. The assembly poured hot ashes on the back of the frong as a punishment, and since then its back is full of warts. The tale has Mikir and Kuki parallels.

Miris have other kinds of tales too, for instance, tales illustrative of a belief in fate and wisdom. One day God's wife said to him, "Why don't you bestow wealth on that unfortunate person?" God said, "An unfortunate person can never acquire wealth." To prove the point he poured gold coins into the boat of the man. The latter thought there must have fallen a larger amount of gold coins in his yard. So he left his boat and ran home as fast as he could. There was no gold in his yard, nor did he find the coins in his boat. This is about fate, and who does not lean on fate sometimes?

Here is a tale on a more realistic plane and which illustrates the truth that one should not plant anything on the boundary of one's field. Ngate and Narah had a common boundary where Ngate planted a pumpkin seedling. The plant spread into Narah's field and bore fruits. Narah's wife took away the fruits and this led to a feud between the neighbours. One day Narah invited Ngate to a drink. Ngate drank too much and while he remained intoxicated, his host carried off his cattle. When he came to Ngate realized that it was the pumpkin plant raised on he boundary which led to this feud and to this trickery.

Miri folktales have not been recorded to any considerable extent, only a few having seen print. If they are recorded we will find in them many features in common with tales recorded in other parts of Assam, thus showing evidences of give and take among the various cultural groups of the state. I have already pointed to certain similarities with Assamese and Kachari folktales. To give another instance, the Miri tale of *Lightning and Thunder* is substantially the same as the Kachari *Roana and Raoni.* In both a brother develops a unsual passion for his sister, the latter being unwilling to marry him escapes up into the sky. The fair-skinned sister fleeing from her brother is the lightning while the brother who pursues crying and shouting is the thunder. The tale of a Lightning Girl is found also in Western India.

BOOK-REVIEW

TALES FROM THE RAJATARANGINI by S. L. Sadhu, Kapoor Brothers, Srinagar 1967. Demy, VIII + 198. Rs. 12.50.

The author is well-known for his first-book "Folktales from Kashmir" and the book under review is in a sense a companion volume to that. It is a collection of 33 tales with a foreword by Mr. G. M. Sadiq, Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir. Appendix and glossary etc. are also included with the book. The present book according to the author is "based mainly on the *Rajatarangini* of Kalhana, along with its complements which bring the account down to 1587 A.D., and the *Twarikhi Kashmir* by Pir Hassan Shah". It is, he writes again, "not meant to be a contribution to the study of history. Its interest is different. Besides being a chronicle of great celebrity of the *Rajatarangini* is a composition in poetry. Kalhana regarded himself more as a poet than a historian, and his work as *kavya*, an exercise in poetic composition, the tales herein set down add spice to the narrative of monarchs."

This selection naturally follows the reviewers own lives of interest and it is, of course, that with a slight change of angle are altogether different choice might be made. On the whole this volume presents a substantial contribution of folk-tale studies. Certainly these tales have a refreshing variety and "The pith and marrow of the chronicle thus becomes accessible to the reader in a form that is lucid, crisp and enjoyable" said G. M. Sadiq in his foreword. Prof. Sadhu deserves every praise for the book under review and earlier works on regional folktale of India. We wish more such works from him.

—Shibnarayan Kabiraj.

LOK-DHARMA PRADARSHANKARI KALYEN (In Hindi), by Devilal Samar, Bharatiya Lok Kala Mandal, Udaipur, Rajasthan, Rs. 15.00 (1969).

The book under review is a fine example of the folk entertainmental aspect which is characterised by different chapters in the following three sections: (a) *loksangeet* (folk song) (b) *loknritya* (folk dance) & (c) *loknatak* (folk drama). The author has described the definition of meaning in terms of prior meaning-relations (incompatibility, hyponymy etc.) the definition and equivalence and statement of the meaning relations for specified contexts, and not for the folklore as a whole. It is certainly one of the most important contributions to the regional folklore study and we wish its wide popularity.

—Samir Ghosal.

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WOMEN IN INDIAN FOLKLORE

Edited with an Introduction by Sankar Sen Gupta

Foreword by Smt. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India

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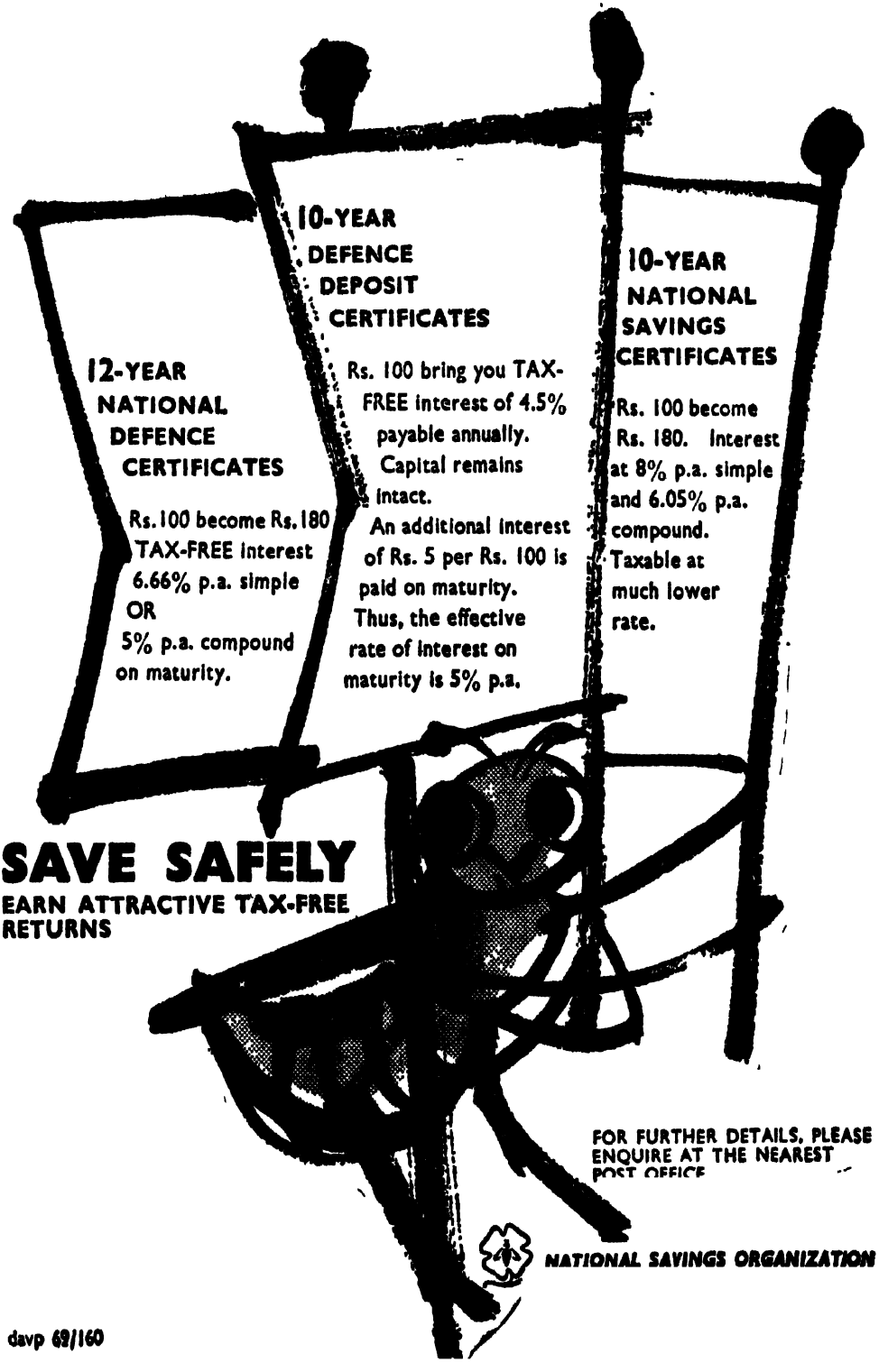
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MUSIC OF INDIA VI

PURNIMA SINHA

FOLK CLASSICAL CONTINUUM IN INDIAN MUSIC

One interesting feature of the musicial forms of the peoples of India is the nature of continuity between the most advanced classical forms and the simple songs of the peasants and the tribals. This theme has been explored in detail with reference to the songs of Pargana Barabhum of former Manbhum district of Bihar.

Introduction :

It is a common belief in India that Classical Indian music has been created by the sages of the Vedic Period. But it seems improbable that a set of sages or intellectuals could deliberately plan to build up such a complex and diversified musical system like Indian *Raga* music without any initial basic materials in popular form. When we look around today, we find that the common people sing in groups in different ways on diverse occasions like levelling a house top, carring a load, marriage and many other festivals. It appears that the different human groups tend instinctively to set their work for livelihood and social activities in some rhythmic pattern and some melody set in rhythm becomes spontaneously associated with the rhythm of their various activities. It seems very unlikely that the common people of ancient India did not have any songs to express their moods and sentiments and to enliven their daily and seasonal activities.

It is reasonable to speculate that when ancient Indian society reached a phase of urbanisation it provided scope for gifted individual specialists

to create complicated musical forms by synthesizing and universalizing the diverse folk traditions that flowed into these centres. It appears that such creative systematisation of musical forms also stimulated the scholars with musical taste to build up a theoretical base of grammar of music. Panini, the famous scholar of Sanskrit grammar also contributed to the development of the theory of Indian Classical music. The universal appeal of Indian Classical music perhaps lies in the fact that the principles underlying the building up of Classical music are derived from diverse sources of spontaneous popular creation of a variety of ethnic groups in India.

The evolution of music from folk forms seems to have followed a course parallel to that of language, e.g. from Prakrit to Sanskrit. It is known that grammarians like Panini came to the scene only after the Sanskrit language had already come into being. It may safely be assumed that the theoreticians of Indian Classical music like Bharatmuni, Matanga and others operated on the empirical base of existing classical forms created by practicing musicians. The theoreticians in their turn contributed to a conscious systematic expansion of the classical musical forms. I have already mentioned earlier (Sinha 1959 : 67) that it is difficult to trace the historic stages of evolution of Indian music from textual records alone. The ancient texts, as also the names of some of the *Ragas* indicate that many of the Ragas might have been derived from regional (Deshi) motifs. There are, however, no descriptive records of these Deshi motifs other than Matanga's (Matanga : 39) suggestion that in contrast to the *Marga Sangeet* Deshi may have less than five notes. I have discussed in detail (Sinha 1968) why it is not possible to build up a raga with less than five notes.

The limitations of the textual approach in drawing up a plausible scheme of evolution of Indian music may partly be countervailed through comparative study of contemporary forms of tribal, folk and classical music which still persist in different regions, retaining distinctive character. This has been possible due to the slow rate of industrialisation and development of modern means of communication in rural India.

It should however be stressed that even in pre-industrial India, tribal and peasant villages were not completely isolated from the urban centres of civilisation. There was slow but perennial contact between the rural and urban centres through travelling pilgrims, mendicants, Sadhus and varieties of cultural performers. Thus there was a situation which promoted the stabilisation of narrow regional styles, but at the same time allowed the local motifs to be elaborated, systematised and absorbed in the classical tradition by specialists who came in contact with the rural areas. On the other hand, the classical forms must also have percolated into the rural areas and formed local variants through a process of dilu-

tion. Such processes must have brought about many changes in the original folk forms, some new dimensions might have been evolved, but still it seems that some characteristic core pattern have been retained, as it happens in the case of the growth of a child to adulthood, when in spite of many developments the person can be identified.

There is a great wealth of varieties of characteristic regional folk music distributed over different parts of India. Compared to the abundance of available materials, very little work has so far been done in analysing the samples in a systematic way and preserving them in the form of records and notations. Notations of some tribal and folk songs have been published by S. M. Tagore (Tagore : 1879). The Folklore and Folk Music Research Institute has started collecting tape records of folk music of different regions and has published an anthology (Biswas et. al. 1967). Tape records of folk music of different regions have been collected by the Anthropological Survey of India. S. Bhattacharya of Anthropological Survey has dealt with some aspects of folk music of Belpahari area (Bhattacharya 1968 : 66-79). I assume that institutions like All India Radio, Sangeet Natak Academy and the various Tribal Research Institutes in the different States have a wealth of tapes on tribal and folk music from different regions of India. No classified inventory of these are available for insterested scholars.

The problem of analysis of folk music may be divided into the following two parts :

(1) to trace the connection, if any, between classical and folk music
(2) to locate the special characteristic of folk music as distinct from classical music.

In this paper I shall deal mainly with the first part of the problem.

Folk-Classical continuum :

If we assume that folk music of different areas have contributed to the development of Indian Classical Music, it is not enough just to keep records of the notations of the music of different areas, but we have to work out a method of finding out the principles underlying the selection of characteristic modes of combination of musical notes in the songs of different region and the various forms of classical music.

Not enough theoretical work has been done in modern India to provide a tool for analysing music. I have given before (Sinha 1968 : 476) a brief description of the method of analysis and classification of *Kheyal* songs proposed by Sanyal in the book *Ragas and Raginis* (Sanyal 1959). In this paper I shall apply the same method to some tribal and folk songs in order to find out whether the basic principles underlying the melodic

motifs of the tribal songs have any link with those of classical music. I shall not be concerned with covering the total range of tribal and folk music of the Indian sub-continent, or deal even with all the varieties of folk music of Bengal in detail, but focus attention on tribal and folk music of a particular region, namely Pargana Barabhum of former Manbhum district in order to analyse and illustrate a pattern of continuum in formal structure from the tribal to the folk and classical levels. The tribal songs have been selected for detailed analysis in this paper because the melodic movements of these songs are simplest and thus they are expected to show the rudiments of basic structural principles of musical forms more clearly compared to those of the elaborate forms.

As I am mainly interested in looking into the tribal musical forms in relation to the general problem of evolution of classical music, I have selected a region where tribal groups are not completely isolated from the peasant and urban communities. Pargana Barabhum represents such a transitional cultural zone where tribal and peasant traditions have been synthesised in a regional pattern.

Before describing the musical forms of Barabhum, I shall make some general remarks about some of the well known folk forms of East and West Bengal.

In most of the contemporary folk songs of Bengal, notes corresponding to some classical *Ragas* are used. The full fledged *Ragas*, however are not consciously developed, the strict principles of sequences are not always adhered to and occasionally shades of different *Ragas* are used in the same composition. In many cases though, the rules of *Raga* music are strictly maintained in compositions of folk songs. For such cases it is almost impossible to distinguish the folk songs from light classical songs on the basis of analysis of melodic patterns. The only distinction is that there is no rigorous training system or centre for learning folk music, which is born through spontaneous human expression and is developed in rural setting.

The most important folk songs of Bengal are the songs of religious mendicants or *Bauls* and *Bhatiali*, the songs of the boatman. There are also many other forms of folk songs prevalent in different region of Bengal—songs of boat race, marriage songs, devotional songs of Vaishnava mendicants, Jarigan, Kabigan (the extempore composition of songs by two debating parties usually based on parts of one or other mythological stories) and so on.

The most frequently used tunes in Bengali folk music approaches the raga *Jhinjhit* which is based on the scale *Khambaj*:

C D E F G A B^{b}C

and has the characteristic movement:

CDF, GFEDCB^{b} A 1 ACCDE, DEC (1)

This form of *Jhinjhit* is called *Kasauli Jhinjhit* (Chakravarty 1954).

The more common form of *Jhinjhit* used in North Indian classical music has the following characteristic movement :

CDF, GFEDCEB^{b}AG, GACDEFE, AC (2)

Kasauli Jhinjhit may have been derived from folk music. Motif (1) is common in almost all types of folk songs of Bengal - specially in *Bhatiali.* In Baul songs in some cases, it changes more toward *Bilwal* by using B instead of B^{b}.

CDEGABAC, BAGFEDEFEDC

In most cases, for particular compositions, consistent rules for ascent are maintained. For example, for a particular song, either of the following movements may be chosen and strictly adhered to (*ibid*) :

CDFG
CDEG
CDEFG

Reference of records[1] of some specimens of common types of folk songs of Bengal have been given at the end of this article. From listening to the records one can have some idea about the melodic pattern of the folk songs, but the way of presentation and the nature of accompanying instruments used by the "urban" folk singers are quite different from those of the rural people. Thus the full flavour of the genuine folk songs is not presented in these records. With these prediminary remarks we may now move on towards a detailed discussion on the patterns of the folk and tribal music in Pargana Barabhum.

Folk and Tribal Music of Barabhum :

Before analysing the melodic pattern of the songs of the diverse tribes and castes of Parganas Barabhum I shall give a brief description of the ethnic and social background of the various categories of songs. Most of these songs were collected from the villages Nimdih, Ketunga and Madhupur in Chandil Police Station Area.

Ethnic Background * :

There are about 64 tribes and castes forming a population of nearly

* Information on the ethnic background of Pargana Barabhum is based on published articles by Dr. Surajit Sinha who has done extensive field work in the area at different periods during 1950- 1960 (See Sinha 1958, 1958a, 1962, 1965, 1966).

244,000 people in an area of 635 square miles in Pargana Brabhum in the former district of Manbhum. Among the diverse ethnic groups of this Pargana the most numerous are the Mahato, the Santhal and the Bhumij. The Bhumij, who are locally recognised as the original settlers of the Pargana, have lost their original Munda language, speak the local dialect of Bengali and have become Hinduised. While the bulk of the population of this Pargana are peasants, there are a few small tribes like the Kharia and the Pahira who are settled in isolated foothill hamlets and live on hunting and gathering.

During a period between the 12th and the 16th centuries the Bhumj tribe of this region evolved a series of small kingdoms from a tribal base and their upper starata came to be recognised as Rajput-Kshatriyas. The cultural pattern of Barabhum thus provides a wide range of levels from the primitive hunters and gatherers to the artistocratic chieftains (Sinhas, 1962).

The songs of the region also represent the diversity of levels. Some are sung exclusively by tribal groups on specific ritual and festive occasions others are by the general peasantry in regional festivals where people belonging to many tribes and castes from many village meet at the festive ground. Some songs are sung by specialist dancing girls (*nachni*) or by their male trainers (*rasik*) under the patronage of the feudal aristocracy. We also know that at least since the famous pilgrimage of Mahaprabhu Sri Chaitannya from Puri to Mathura there has been a deep impact of Gaudiya Vaishnavism in rituals and songs of the region (Sinha 1966). From the nature of the contemporary *Nachni* songs one gets the impression that the Gandiya Vaishnava impact was overlain on a more archaic stimulus of Sahajiya Vaishnavism (Datta-Majumder 1969).

The social stage and the types of songs:

It will be apparent to any observer that the poetic as well as melodic structure of songs have grown complex according to the "social stage" for the songs. These may be divided as follows:

(a) Songs limited to single tribal groups connected with exclusive rituals and festivals:

Sarhul songs: These songs are sung during Sarhul Parab (the festival of the first blossom of *sal* flowers) by the Bhumij, the Kharia or the Pahira.

(b) Songs limited to small group of females belonging to the various low castes and tribes in a village:

Karam songs—Songs sung by groups of females in a neighbourhood in a village on the occasion of *Karam* festival celebrated for the welfare

of crops and brothers during the month of *Bhadra* (August-September). (Sinha, S. 1956).

(c) Songs sung on special festive occasions in *Parab Tanr* (uplands where fairs and festivals take place) :

Sometimes these festivals are also connected with sacred bath e.g. *Tusu Parab* on the occasion of *Makar Samkranti*. The typical songs of this category belong to two groups : *Baduriya Danr Saila* and *Tusu*. *Bhaduriya Danr Saila* are now-a-days sung only by men while dancing in circles anti-clockwise. Formerly women of the lower castes and tribes used to take part in group dances in the month of *Bhadra* during *Ind* and *Chhata Parab* festivals. In some of these festivals huge umbrellas are raised in honour of the Raja of the Pargana or his subordinate Chiefs.

In *Tusu* festival the main singers are females. Young girls, in small neighbourhood groups, sing these songs every evening throughout the month of *Paus* (December-January). On the sacred date of *Makar-Samkranti* these small singing groups go out of the village with the goddess *Tusu* represented in the form of clay models or as cowdung balls to the nearby tank or to a distant riverside for sacred bath. On this occasion small groups of females carrying their own *Tusu* meet other groups from different villages on the way to the bathing site. They compete and join with one another in impromptu composition of songs without changing the melodic base.

In both *Bhaduriya Danr Saila* and *Tusu* songs the word themes and melodic structures have to be adequate for the multi-ethnic and large population who participate in these songs coming from a wide region.

(d) Songs sung by specialist *Jhumuriyas :*

Under the partonage of the Rajas and their subordinate Zamindars a number of composers of songs have become famous in the region--Dinabandhu, Narottam, Ramkrishna, Bhabapita, Lagonsai and so on. The composers of these songs, *Jhumurs*, are known as *Jhumuriyas ;* but the songs are mainly sung by dancing girls, *Nachni*. These songs are also known as *Nachni Saila* sung to the accompaniment of drums and *Shaina* trumpets. The amorous, yet celestial, love of Radha and Krishna form the themes of these *Jhumurs*.

Sometimes *Jhumurs* are also sung by gifted male or female workers in the paddy fields during the season of transplantation. These are known as *Ashariya Jhumur*. One also hears lone cowherds singing aloud these *Jhumurs* while tending cattle.

Jhumurs may also deal with spiritual symbols in *Dehatattva Jhumurs* sung by people attached to a *Sadhu* or holy person. Similar spiritual themes are sung in *Khyapar Dhua* songs.

The above types of songs do not exhaust the varieties of songs sung by the people of Barabhum. There are also songs sung in connection

with the festival of the cattle, *Ahira Geet,* varieties of songs connected with different phases of marriage ceremony, songs introducing the masked *Chhau* dances and obscene songs, *Ban Geet,* sung by young men to attract young girls in forests and lonely places. I shall also not deal with the special songs of the primitive Kharia and the Pahira tribes. The varieties of songs of the Santal have also not been dealt with.

A description of the method of Analysis:

I have described briefly the method of analysis of songs proposed by Sanyal (Sinha 1968 :ibid). For convenience of understanding the analysis of the folk and tribal songs of Barabhum to be presented in the next section, I will discuss Sanyal's method in more detail.

The basic assumption is that a *raga* based song rests on some pivotal points of notes related by *sambad* (consonance) or relations like C-G, and *anubad* (mediance) or relations like C-E or C-E^b. From analysis of many songs, Sanyal observed that the following conditions are generally fulfilled by songs labelled with *raga-rigini* names :

(1) A complete theme should essentially show a predominance of combined duration of a selected set of notes constituting a consonant chord or notes related as CEG, CE^bG, DFA, EGB etc., dist 'buted horizentally. Such combinations of notes are known as *"Khandameru"* * and have been termed as *"universals"* by Sanyal. The duration, or value of a *Khandameru* is measured by counting the duration of each of the three component notes of the *Khandameru,* in units of one beat in the rhythmic setting in a complete melodic theme. The three notes comprising a *Khandameru* may remain distributed in the composition and may not, and in general, do not, occur successively. For calculating the value of a particular *Khandameru,* the constituent notes of the *Khandameru* have to be selected from the total composition and value of each note has to be added together. A *raga* based musical composition subjected to such analysis is expected to yield a set of *Khandameru* with different values. In well established compositions, within *Raga-Ragini* frame work, the *Khandameru* with the highest value or the *dominent Khandameru* generally has a value at least 50% of the total value of all the notes in the composition.

At least one of the *Khandameru*s usually has a *complimentary Khandameru* with a common mediant e.g., EG in (CEG, EGB) or FA in

* The term *Khandameru* may also be used as a general term representing other types of sectional presentation of the *meru* (succtssive arrangement of the 12 note scale), but for the purpose of the present analysis the term *Khandameru* would always indicate the particular combination of triple notes stated above.

(DFA, FAC) etc. These are known as *mithuna* or couple. We notice that one component of the couple is comprised of notes corresponding to a major, and the other to a minor chord. From the *Mithunas*, composite units of four notes like CEGB or DFAC, are formed. Such compressed units of *mithunas* are known as "*Matrikas*. According to Sanyal, the dominant *Matrika* or the *Matrika* formed from the dominant *Khandameru* reflects the basic character or core pattern of the musical theme. The value, of the dominant *Matrika* is measured by summing up the individual note value of each of the four notes constituting the *Matrika*. The value of the dominant *Matrika* for a well established composition should again be greater than 50% of the total value of all the notes.

The two conditions stated above should be considered to be the basic criteria for categorising a sample of song in a *raga-ragini* frame work. The *Matrika* composed of the dominant *Khandameru* defines the basic class of the *raga* or *ragini*. Subsidiary *Matrikas* composed of *Khandameru*s lower in value determine further sub-classification.

For searching for the dominant *Matrika* of a musical theme we have to start from the dominant *Khandameru* and look for its complimentary partner from the list of *Khandameru*s obtained from the composition. One *Khandameru* can combine with either of two partners to form a couple e.g., CEG can combine either with ACE or EGB. If both are present in the list the one having a value nearest to CEG has to be chosen, so that due weightage is given to the pre-dominance of *Khandameru*s in selecting the dominant *Matrika*. If no partner for the dominant *Khandameru* is present, then the *Khandameru* which comes next in value in the list is to be chosen to form the dominant *Mithuna*.

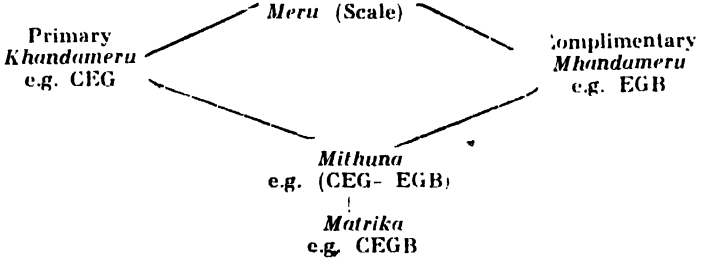


Fig. 1

The process of selecting the dominant *Matrika* is represented in Fig. 1.

After selecting the dominant *Matrika*, its value is calculated by summing up the value of each of the four notes constituting the *Matrika*. The dominant *Matrika* is supposed to represent the basic class of the *Raga* or *Ragini*. After isolating the dominant *Matrika*, subsequent

Matrikas may be formed by the *Khandamerus* with lower values. The order and nature of the subsequent *Matrikas* determine the subclass of the composition.

Sanyal also states that in preparing the list of *Khandamerus*, if the value of a pair of notes related either by *Sambad* or by *anubad* is greater than 40% or "two fifth" of the total value of all the notes in the scale, then the third note required to complete the *Khandameru* has to be assumed to be present, or is supposed to be latent in the composition.

It may be pointed out that one should not seek mathematical justification for the so called "rule of two fifth" for locating the latent notes. It is a rule that has been empirically obtained by analysing many samples. For instance it has been observed in many cases that a note predicted by applying the rule to a part of a song is found to appear in the complete theme. Also, there are some songs conventionally labelled by a *Raga* name but do not show the basic *Matrika* corresponding to the class of the *Raga*. When the rule is applied in analysing such songs, they reveal the same basic *Matrika*, derived from many established themes with the same *Raga* name.

An important question may be raised regarding the validity of the method of classification proposed by Sanyal. We notice that there may be cases, where a slightly longer duration of a note compared to another note may change the dominant Matrika, or the basic class of a composition. The problem therefore is whether a very small difference between the value of two notes make any significant difference in the nature of a musical theme. Thus the question arises whether any difference in note value between two notes have to be considered relevant in determining the class of a musical theme or values within a range has to be grouped together. Let us scrutinise the different cases that may arise in determining the priority of a *Khandameru* or for that matter, the dominant *Matrika*.

Case I: When one of the notes is different between two *Khandamerus* e.g. FAC and ACE. Even a small difference in value between F and E may interchange the positions of the *Khandamerus* and it may become difficult to decide which of them should be the dominant *Khandameru*. But whichever be of higher value, the class basis remains unaffected because these two *Khandamerus* would form the dominant *Matrika* FACE. A complication arises when the dominant *Khandameru* is determined but there is a competition between two other *Kandamerus* to occupy the second position, to be determined by a small change of value of one of the notes. For example, when FAC is the dominant *Khandameru* and the two rival *Khandamerus* for the second position are ACE and DFA. A small change of value between E and D would determine whether the dominant *Matrika* be FACE or DFAC.

Case 2: When two of the notes are different between two *Khandamerus* e.g. ACE, DFA, one of which may become the dominant *Khandameru*. In this case, to affect the class character by changing the value of one note two other notes have to be of equal value.

Case 3: When all the three notes are different e.g. ACE & GED. In this case the adjustment between the other notes have to be more complicated. But it is apparent that many notes get involved in determining the priority of one of the universals.

Thus we find that changing the value of a single note is not an isolated event in determining the position of an universal. Without going into investigation of different possibilities in an abstract level, we can proceed with investigating the concrete examples of songs, arbitrarily assuming that even a fraction of a note value detectable by the ear has to be taken account of in determining the priority of a note or the *Khandemeru* comprising of the note. For finally testing the method we shall have to depend on the convention of names ascribed to the different classes and have to look for the level of correlation between the class names and dominant *Matrika* assigned to them on the basis of analysis.

The working method may be summarised as follows:

(1) Place the notes serially in the form of a scale C. D. E. F.... etc which manifestly go to compose the particular specimen and count the note value (N. V.) of each note.

(2) Count the total value (T. V.) of all the notes, summing up the N. V. of each note.

(3) Calculate the coefficient of latent value (C. L. V.) as T. V. ÷ 4 = C. L. V.

(4) Calculate the value of each *Khandameru* that can be constructed from the note values of the scale. Mediant and consonant pairs having a value greater than C. L. V. have also to be used to form *Khandamerus* with the inclusion of latent notes. Calculate the percentage value of the dominant *Khandameru*.

(5) Construct the dominant and subsidiary *Mithunas* and the corresponding *Matrikas* and count the value of the *Matrika* so formed. Calculate the percentage value of the dominant Matrika.

The result may be arranged in a tabular form in 6 columns as follows:

(1) N. V., (2) C. L. V., (3) C. V. N., (4) V. K., (5) C. V. K., (6) C V. Mithuna-Matrika.

ANALYSIS OF THE SONGS

It may be pointed out again that the notes CDEFGAB along with the flat and sharp notes comprising the 12 note scale used in the following notations do not represent the exact pitches as understood in Western Music but correspond to do, re, mi, fa so, la, ti, equivalent to the Indian notes Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni abbreviated as S, R, Ga, M, P, Da, N in the notation. The flats corresponding to R, Ga, Da, N are represented by the small letters r, g, d, n, and the sharp of M by m. The notes have in all cases been transposed in such a way that C corresponds to 'Do' or Sa in each case. The corresponding notes in the higher and lower octaves are indicated by putting a dot above and below the notes respectively. For example, if C represents middle C (S), (C ! (S) would indicate the note in the higher and (C) that in the lower octave.

I should also mention that the actual notes used in the songs may not in all cases correspond to the notes of the 12 note scale, but slightly displaced *srutis* are used by the tribals. In preparing the notations I have used the nearest notes in the 12 note scale corresponding to the *srutis* used. Since the purpose of the present analysis is to find out the common factors between the folk and classical songs, this approximation would not involve any serious error in the analysis. The deviations from the 12 note scale give some particular distinctive flavour to the tribal songs. There are individual variations in the execution of the songs by different singers, and often a tendency to move toward the notes of the 12 note scale is observed.

We begin with the simplest type of songs—Sarhul songs, sung by the tribal Bhumij, Kharia and Pahira.

I. SARHUL SONG:

Specimen 1

Word theme:

Ki phule seba laya ki phule seba
Saloi phule laya Sarhul seba

Translation:

O priest, with what flowers will you perform the worship
The priest will perform the worship with Sal flowers

Notation :

1. E — — | D C — | C C — | C C — | $\overline{DC}$ — — | C $\overline{DC}$ — | C C — | — —
   Ga — — | R S — | S S — | S S — | RS — — | S RS — | S S — | — —
   Ki . . | Phu le . | Se ba . | la ya . | Ki . . | Phu le — | Se ba . | . .

2. E — — | D C — | C E — | D C — | C — C | C C — | C — — | — — —
   Ga — — | R E — | S R — | R S — | S — S | S S — | S — — | — — —
   Sa . . | lo i . | Phu le . | la ya . | Sa r hu | l Se . | ba . . | . . .

– and . represent continuation of the previous note. The bar abose the notes like DC indicate equal sharing of duration between D and C on the same beat. The song is complete in two lines containing 24 beats in each line, divided in to 8 bars containing 3 beats in each bar. Only 3 notes CDE (S R Ga) are used in the song.

Distribution of note value in the successive lines of the song is given in table 1. Sum of the value of all the notes in the theme is denoted by Σ In the table and in subsequent discussion, Indian symbols will be used to designate the notes. As there is no chance of confusion with the symbols of the Western scales, 'Da' and 'Ga' will be replaced by D and G respectively.

TABLE 1

	N. V.					
Note Line	S	R	G	Σ	S+G	R
1	19	2	3	24	22	2
2	17	2	5	24	22	2
Total	36	4	4	48	44	2

TABLE 2

N. V.	C. L. V	VK	CVK	C.V Mithuna—Matrika
S — 36	48 x·4	DSG — 44	DSG, SGP } 91.7%	(DSG—SGP— SGPD 91.7%
G — 8	31.2	SGP — 44		
R — 4				
Total 48		Scale SRG (P) (D)		

The columns in table 1 give the individual note value of the different notes in the scale, and the rows represent the line of the theme. Thus to find out the duration of G in the second line, we have to read the number in column G and row 2, i.e. the No. 5. Details of distribution of succession of notes are not apparant from the chart but the emphasis of the different notes are brought into relief. It is interesting to note that although the two lines do not have exactly similar melody, the sum of note value of S and G and also value of R are the same in both the lines. The note S has the highest value and the combination SG is supposed to be emphasised in the melodic theme. In that case, what can be the role of R in the song? We know that although R is an overtone which is weak in intensity compared to G in relation to S, the frequency ratio R : S is nearer in value to S compared to that of G : S. Thus it is easier to pass to G through the step R. In the scale used in the song, only S and G are related by mediance. R is the weakest note and it is unaccompanied by any note related by mediance or consonance. Thus no *Khandarma* is manifest in the song. But we find that the combined value of S and G is greater than C. L. V. Thus we can assume that there is an unfulfilled tendency of including either D or P in the scale to complete the *Khandarmacns* DSG or SGP. No preference for either D or P as the latent note can be predicated. We shall therefore assume that both D and S are virtually present i.e., there is a tendency to complete both the *Khandamcrns* DSG and SGP which generates the couple DSG SGP. Thus the dominant *Matrika* of the above Sarhul song is assumed to be SGPD. The more important reason behind the presence of 'R' might be that 'R' as a neutral note is essential for seabilising the Matrike SGPD. The minimum requirement for completion of a *Mithuna* is the potential existence of D and P in the design. Thus the scale notes derived from the song are SRG (P) (D) including the latent notes given in parenthesis, has the possibility of generating the *raga* classes *Bhupali, Deskar* etc.

Specimen No. 2

Word theme :

Bagan barir bhitorey
Titir sinan korey dada
Gaye lal mati makhey

Translation :

In the background orchard
Partridges are taking bath
Smearing their body with the red earth !

Notation :

1.	A	A	A	C	C	C	D	E	—	D	C	—
	Da	Da	Da	S	S	S	R	Ga	—	R	S	—
	Ba	ga	n	ba	ri	r	bhi	to	.	re	.	.
2.	E	E	—	C	$\overline{CR}$	F	D	C	C	C	—	—
	Ga	Ga	—	S	$\overline{SR}$	G	R	S	S	S	—	—
	Ti	ti	r	si	na	na	Ko	ray	da	da	0	0
3.	E	E	$\overline{CD}$	E	D	C	C	C	—	—	—	—
	Ga	Ga	$\overline{SR}$	G	R	S	S	S	—	—	—	—
	Ga	Ye	la	l	ma	ti	ma	khe	0	0	0	0

TABLE 3

N.V	C.L.V	V.K	C.V.K	C.V.
				Mithuna—Mitrika
S—20	36×·4	SG(P)—29	DSG—89%	(DSG—SGP)—SGPD
R— 4	=14·4	DSG—32	SGP	89%
G— 9				
D— 3				
Total—36	Scale : S R G P D			

In this song the *Khandameru* DSG appears explicitly. The *Matrika* SGPD appears with the help of the latent note 'P'. The scale notes used for the composition is SRG (P) D.

Specimen No. 3

Word theme :

Ee dungri oo dungri
Pial paklo
Kari khanye re mairi
Dant gablo
Pial khanye re dada
Mon bhanglo

Translation :

The *Pial* fruits are ripe on
this hillock and that.
I took *Kari* fruit
and my teeth are tinted
I took *Pial* fruit O brother !
and my heart is broken.

Notation :

The song is complete in 6 lines, each line containing 12 beats divided as 3/3/3/3.

1.	D — D R — R Ee . dung	— C — — S — . ri .	D — D R — R 00 . dung	— C — — C — . ri .
2.	E — E Ga — pi Ga a l	D — E R — Ga pa . k	F — — M — — lo . .	E — — Ga — — . . .
3.	C C — S S — Ka ri .	E E — Ga Ga — Khan ye .	D — C R — S re . mai	— Ga — — E — . ri .
4.	D — C R — S dan . t	C — C S — S ga . b	C — — S — — lo . .	— — — — — — . . .
5.	D E — R Ga — Pi a l	F E — M Ga — khan ye .	D — C R — S re . da	— E — — Ga — . da .
6.	D — C R — S mo . n	C C — S S — dha ng .	C — — S — — lo . .	— — — — — — . . .

The distribution of the notes in the different lines are given in the following table :

TABLE 4

N. V

Note→ line	C S	D R	E Ga	F M	Σ	S+Ga	R+M
1	4	8	0	0	12	4	8
2	0	2	7	3	12	7	5
3	5	2	5	0	12	10	2
4	10	2	0	0	12	10	2
5	2	3	6	1	12	8	4
6	10	2	0	0	12	10	2
Total	31	19	18	4	72		

We notice from table 4 that there is a periodicity in the value of SG and RM in the successive lines parallel to the rhyming of the word theme.

TABLE 5

N. V.	C.V.N.	C.L.V	V.K	C.V.K.	C.V Mithuna Matrike
S—31	S		SGP—49 MDS—35 DSG—49	SGP | 68% DSG |	(DSG—SGP) =SGPD 68%
R—19	R	72x.4 =24·8			
Ga—18	Ga				
M—4	M				
Total—72		Scale	SRGMD		

The scale contains the four consecutive notes SRGM. R is comparatively strong in the sample perhaps because the supporting note M related by mediance to R is present. In this sample too, on the basis of the strength of S+G we can assume P and D to be the latent notes, forming the *Mithuna* DSG—SGP or the *Matrika* SGPD. Although the value of R is quite high, the combined value of RM is less than C. L. V. and thus the Khandamerus RMD or nRM cannot be assumed to be present. Although M is weaker than R, the strength of S gives support to the consonant combination MS, which becomes greater than CLV, and thus the *Khandameru* MDS is supposed to be present. We thus have the dominant *Mithuna* DSG– SGP and the uncoupled *Khandameru* MDS in the design. SGPD is the dominant *Matrika*. The *Khandameru* MDS is third in position. DSG and SGP are higher by 20% to MDS. The additional note 'M' appears in the scale, (P) and (D) remains latent again. The scale notes SRGM (P) (D) derived from the song has the possibility of generating *ragas* of the class represented by *Durga*.

Specimen 4

Word theme :

Khejur Khejur
Hilena dolena dada
Khejur Khejur
Girey porilo
Baney bhasilo

Translation :

The Date Palm trees
That never swing this way or that, O brother!
The Date Palm trees,
Fell down!
The Date Palm trees
Were Swept away by the flood!

Notation :

1. C — — D E — | C — — D E — |
   S — — R Ga — | S — — R Ga — |
   Khe . . ju . r | Khe . . ju . r |

2. A — A — G — | A — A — G — | F E — D C — |
   Da — Da — P — | Da — Da — P — | M Ga — R S — |
   Hi . le . na . | do . le . na . | da . . da . . |

3. C — — D E — | C — — D E — |
   S — — R Ga — | S — — R Ga — |
   Khe . . ju . r | Khe . . ju . — |

4. C C — C — C | C — — — — — |
   S S — S — S | S — — — — — |
   Gi rey . po ri | lo . . — — — |

5. C — — D E — | C — — D E — |
   S — — R Ga — | S — — R Ga — |
   Khe . . ju . r | Khe . — ju . r |

6. C C — C — C | C — — — — — |
   S S — S — S | S — — — — — |
   Ba ney . bha . si | lo . . . . . |

TABLE 6

N.V	C.L.V	V.K	C.V.K	C.V
				Mithuna—Matrika
S—42	31·2	SGP—61	DSG	(DSG—SGP)—SGPD
R— 8		RMD—16	—83%	87%
G—15		MDS—51	SGP	(RMD—MDS)—SRMD
M— 1		DSG—65	MDS	75%
P— 4			RMD	
D— 8				

Total—78 Scale : SRGMPD

In this song the scale notes SRGMPD appear explicitly. M and R are weak, compared to SG. The two *Matrika* SGPD and SRMD appears, SGPD having much higher value.

It is apparant that the samples of Sarhul Songs using only 3 or 4 notes have a very simple melodic movement, yet they are distinctly different from recitation of poetry and are termed as songs. In cases of poems not associated with melody, there is too much clustering of words, which do not permit adequate duration for a musical note to rest on a vowel sound, which is essential for arousing a musical sensation. Too much duration again, takes the mind away from the chain of thought associated with the word theme. In the Sarhul song, while the long duration of the notes carrying very little consonant sound gives the effect of a song, the simple poetic content remain undisturbed. Also, before standing on a note with a vowel, even within two notes, there are more ups and downs compared to that of a recitation.

(To be continued).

SANKAR SEN GUPTA

WOMEN IN ANCIENT LITERATURE AND FOLKLORE

(Continued from previous issue)

The women of Bengal wield considerable influence in society and play significant role in various walks of life.[13]

A girl in a Hindu house is taught to respect the members of the family especially the elders from her very childhood. A married woman is supposed to worship her husband like god and obey his commands. This was meant for discipline. Thus a Hindu wife is expected to be true to her husband and serve him even in the time of adversity. She was to follow her *partivrata dharma* (complete loyality and devotion to husband) and lead a very chaste life. Domestic sphere is the most important field of woman's activities in folk society. She has to grind the corn, prepare food and serve it for herself. Again she has to fetch water from the well, she has to mud-pluster the floor and sweep the house. In leisure she is found to spin for making garments. Thus her whole day is occupied with the domestic affairs which formed the usual routine.

The peculiar disability attached to our women is based on religion. Woman was temptress and was warned against religions. Still then during the periods of the Muslims and the British some women of the ruling class seem to occupy respectable positions.[14] They took active

13. Interested readers may read H. R. Bhagat's 'Upanishads, Ten Principals, Edited with Sankara's Commentary, Poona, 1918; *Therigatha*, Eng. trans by Mrs. Rhys Davids, London, 1909; *Ancient India*, as described by Megasthenes and Arrain, Trans. by M. Crindle, London, 1877; J. L. Devidas's *A short history of women*, London, 1928; G. D. Banerji's *Hindu Law of Stridhana*, Calcutta, 1923; Steele's *Law and custom of Hindu castes*, Tripathi's *Marriage Froms under Hindu Law*, Bombay, 1906 and others referred to in the notes and selected bibliography.

14. Mishra, Rekha, *Women in Mughal India*, (based on a thesis approved by the University of Allahabad for D. Phil. in 1965) Munshi Ram, Delhi, 1957.

parts in politics. Seclusion was not practised strictly in the beginning but started growing after the tenth or eleventh century. Some of the ladies took keen interest in intellectual sphere but it appears they were not much encouraged. Then, political disability was defined biologically and became the basis of economic and social disabilities. The object of all these were to prevent women to mingle with men in public affairs. The prejudices persisted even after the advancement of time.

The field of fine-arts specially attracted the attention of the women-folk from the earliest time and the art of music and dance was fairly popular among them. Some of them became the leaders of fashion. These came from satisfaction and pleasures in life and also attach to her special position in the society. Even amidst the great turmoil which was taking place in Western Asia during the eleventh century, the Indian women continued to be an object of care, adoration and chivalry. The traditions, customs, and practices, which were brought into this country by the Turks, were followed by the royalty, noblity and the Turkish soldiers. In course of time there went through modifications and changes under the impact of indegenous condition.

The females by nature are lovers of beauty, of the body. Though the inscriptions are silent on this point but sculptures, images and paintings have much to say about this subject. The examination of early mediaeval images reveal that cloth represent the costumes of the people in general. From the early period Indian women had started wearing *sari* and they covered upper part of their body with *angiya* (bodice) when a great many people of the other parts of the world did not use that. It suggests that the people of India were more civilised from the earliest time. They used long *dupatta* (scarf) of different types when they moved out of their houses. In Northern and Western Indian *Lahanga* (long skirt) was often worn by ladies.

It is also known that *kanchuk* and *chole* (blouse) were used by women. They changed their dresses according to the changing seasons. Ornaments were fairly popular among the ancient women. They adorned themselves with flowers and jewels. The ornaments commonly used were *shishphul* or *sikhapasa* (worn on forehead), ear-rings, bangles garlands, etc It appears that nose-ring was unknown throughout the Hindu period. The ornaments were usually made of gold, silver and various stones. Even poor women used ornaments made of generally ivory, brass and glass.

Beside ornaments, women paid great attention to their toilets. They used cosmetics of various kinds such as sandal paste mixed with saffron. They plaited their hair in different styles and used flowers and

ornaments to decorate them. Hair was combed in broad plaits or loose tresses. They applied collyrium in their eyes. They also put vermilion on their forehead and decorate their faces. On lips, on the tips of their fingers, toes and palm etc.they used different types of dyes and oinments. They were also taught dancing and vocal instrumental music. The traditional liturature and texts again and again assort that dancing, singing and fine arts are to be practised by women.

The dancing girls do not figure in Jatakas and is not mentioned by the Chinese travellers. We may, therefore, presume that the custom was not common till about 6th century A.D. On the architectural evidence its origin may be traced back to nineth century. These dancing girls degenerated into women of easy virtue. An indirect reference of dancing girl is found in the Devapara record of Vijayasena (1095-1158 A.D.) of Sena family. It has been recorded in the Bhuvaneswar inscription (twelfth century A.D.) that there were female attendents (dancing girls) to temples. Thus, it becomes clear that such practice continued in the Northern India till twelfth century A.D. The *devadasi* custom was prevalent in Kathiwar and the number of girls attached to the temple reached high proposition. The temple of Somnath at the time of its destruction by Muhammad Ghori, is said to have served by 350 girls. In Gujarat, twenty thousand girls were serving, singing and offering flowers to the deity. Alberuni told that the lined maintained this institution was a source of attraction to the people thus an income. They met the expenses of army out of the revenue derived there from.

It is also found that during the period of 700-1200 A.D. higher education of women in royal, official and rich families and to the class of dancing girls were in order. Some women were attracted by medical studies and a treatise on subject was written by a lady-doctor, Rosa, which was translated in the eighth century A.D. into Arabic at the order of Khalifa Haruna (Nadvi-Arab Aur Bharat ke Sambandha—112). Girls of ruling families used to receive administrative training. We learn from legends of the mediaeval coinage the names of the queens Sugandha and Didda of Kashmir, Semaladevi of Rajaputana and many upper class women of Bengal who took part in the administration and the type works.

Let us not forget here that the Indian concept of womenhood is basically different from that of the west. The westerners look and regard women as their partners in life. As such they want to qualify them as their best helpers in all walks of life. But Indians regard women, not merely as partners, but as mother. Motherhood is the highest fulfilment of Indian womanhood. So they need that sort of education

which will help them of become ideal housewives, affectionate and competent mothers.

During the medieval period practically the female education in India received a great setback mostly due to early marriage of the girls. During this period the security of the womenfolk was not there. So parents or the guardians were eager somehow to get their daughters married. But then also the ladies of cultured families in the towns continued to get certain training and they adopted themselves with the situation according to the changing climate. It is hazardous to make any statement about the extent of literacy among women in those days but something can be said taking the help of distinguished epigraphists who gleaned from the study of epigraphs that the women of the upper castes were not illeterates. Capriciousness is said to be the trait of the women of the towns and the city damsels indulged intoxicating drugs and sensual excess. The general education was necessary in the society to acquaint the women with system of household works and religious function performed by their husbands.

With the advent of Muslims, due to the insecurity and uncertainty which prevailed, the position of common women further received a set-back. *Purdah* became rigid, child-marriages were fairly common and *jauhar* and *sati* were practiced by the womenfolk of the upper castes in Hindu society. Sometimes, even the Muslim women preferred *jauhar*. Further, Firoz Tughlaq and Sikander Lodi restricted the freedom of women by forbiding their visit to holy shrines and religious centres. It cannot be denied that men and women differ in their out-look upon life, upon relative values which they set upon different sections and principles. We are not suggesting that in any direction men are superior to women. On the contrary, our intention is to draw a correct and unbaised picture of Indian women.

The present position and status of Indian women is largely due to the result of earnest endeavour for more than a hundred years on the part of social reformers, educators and political leaders. Then with the advent of machines, the women are emerging in a new role. The rising cost of living has made it necessary for able women to take to some form of employment in order to supplement family income. Among the masses, women have always had to earn their livlihood and they had always taken part in agricultural labour both as part time and full time or other works. Now that the political and social freedom have been granted so liberally to our women that they have attained such position and powers that they deserved. Still then, they are physically handicapped to undertake heavier works.

It will not be out of place to mention here that the modern India

owes her existence to a revolution against the foreign rule of the British and to a revolution against her own past. The past appeared as the whole traditional system of Indian caste and family life; they had to attack the British, but defended the traditional past such as *sati*, child marriage, etc. which the British attacked, or at least endangered. Thus, there developed a typically Indian nationalist outlook which is a bar to know the truth about the life and living of the people historically. Then, there came vested interests, political pressures, which again stand the way of true historians. The people, inspite of giving their judgments like judges, pleaded through their works as barristers for the superiority of their culture, men and women, for their personal satisfaction or sectarian gains.

From the data we have collected from various sources we can say that the contemporary Indian women do not want to become just housewives. They are interested in remaining independent and economically self sufficient. So the working women are not willing to get out of their jobs after marriage and their having no necessity for the jobs in some cases.

Although according to Hindu idea a girl, a young woman or a matron must do nothing for her own pleasure, even in her own dwelling place. It is clearly stated in Hindu texts that in childhood, she is dependent on her father, in youth on her husband, in widowhood on her sons; if she has no sons, she must depend upon the kinsmen of her deceased husband; if he left no kinsman, she must be dependent upon the kinsmen of her father; if she has no such kinsman, she must be dependent upon the Reya. A woman must never seek to be independent; she must never wish to seperate herself from her father, her husband, her sons, for by such a seperation, she exposes both her father's family and her husband's family which is a sin according to the Hindu view of life.

Folklore of women

It is said that women is concerned with her home and children and she is essentially timid and superstitious. Her speech is comparatively speaking, more conservative than that of man; she retains archaic feature in her dialects and avoid neologisms as far as she can. "Women's vocabulary contains a very large number of intensive words and emphatic particles as well as pejorative—Euphemism is one of the great characterestic of women's speech. . . But women's vocabulary is much more limited than that of men. They are content with old

vocabulary and avoid coming of fresh words."[15] These can be illustrated with examples. Now we will relate some sayings.[16] A woman says on her worthless husband :

Abujhke bojhabo kato bojh nahi mane
Dhenkeke bojhabo kato nitya dhan bane.

This means, how long should I explain a thing to one who would not understand : how long should I expostulate with the husking machine. It would go on husking paddy for ever, or *darbare na pai thai ghare ashe maag kilai,* which means, not finding an opportunity to speak at the court, he comes home and beats his wife. Then, she says aiming at neighbours, *parsi nai barsi* which means, no neighbour, but an angling hook. Then being disgusted on her son a mother says :

Chandra surya asta gelo jonaki ponde bati
bistar karle peter pute ki karbe mor nati

the meaning of this is the sun and the moon are down and light at the tail of fireflies ; much has indeed been done by my own son : what can a grandson do now ? She also says *jatai karo sivsadhana, kalankini nam jabena,* means however much you may worship Lord Siva, your ill fame as an unchaste woman would not be wiped out. Hence it is necessary for every women to be chaste and an ideal one. She should not commit such work by which she can earn a bad name or ill reputation.

Enormous folklore material in English translations on the position of Indian women in general are available especially in the periodical writings. But most of these excellent materials are free translations where there are no original texts and in many cases such translations do not give a correct picture of the imagery and the stylistic catches which are so important for providing the continuity in the tradition as also

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15. Sen, Sukumar, op. cit.

16. অবুঝকে বোঝাবো কত, বোঝ নাহি মানে'।
ঢেঁকিকে বোঝাবো কত, নিত্য ধান বানে ।।

যতই কর শিব-সাধনা কলঙ্কনী নাম যাবে না।
দরবারে না পাই ঠাঁই ঘরে এসে মাগ কিলাই।
পড়শী নয় বড়শী।
চন্দ্র সূর্য্য অস্ত গেল, জোনাকির পোঁদে বাতি।
বিস্তর করলে পেটের পুতে কি করবে মোর নাতি
যতই কর বোঝাপড়া তবু যাবে না জাতের ধারা।

the new borrowings. Further, to explain folklore and the traditions without paying any heed to the original texts is a risk for misquote and wrong explanation. The specialisation demands the preservation and presentation of the original texts along with the translations and topical allusions. Here exactly the field of Indian researches become more precise and his task more difficult as he endeavours to give interpretations. This requires a fair acquaintance with history, sociology, ethnology, linguistics and religion.[17] It is obvious that an analytical approach to the subject matter requires a careful selection also. We will treat a few selected folklore items to describe the position of Indian women in general whose characterestic peculiarity has been very correctly said by Govindadasa in the following line—to my beloved (or a woman) *nakahile mari, kahile khenkari*,[18] which means, I die if I do not speak out, and if I speak out I shall get a blame. From this habit of the womenfolk they have developed their own folklore, they have expressed the subjective and objective conditions of their lives and living, joys, pleasures, sorrows, pangs of seperations, pains, conflicts so on and so forth in their own dialects.

It has been observed by a large number of scholars that physically man is a hunted animal, but the use of weapons makes him the most powerful animal and also makes his struggle against other species easier. The quarrels that a man has in a family over the possession of female can be avoided by prohibiting incest, but in a kin or protective group which consists of different families, it becomes necessary that the union of husband and wife of each family must be recognised and respected by the members of other families, to maintain the solidarity of the kin and protective group. Thus, man has to be conceived not only as a living being in the family, kin and protective group, but he should have a language, culture, tradition, heritage and beliefs. In spite of these common elements man has been divided in innumerable groups occupying the entire inhabitable surface of the earth each group is struggling against the other groups of man's species, observing incest prohibition and having some kind of system of marriage. This is why they have seen their women in a variety of way. To satisfy his need man has attributed the following qualities to the womenfolk according to the Hindu idea.

Every man thinks of future and wants to build up society for tomorrow; from certain beliefs about the ultimate resting of the world,

17. See Bhagvat, Durga's *The Riddle in Indian Life, Lore and Literature*, Bombay, 1965.

18. না কহিলে মরি, কহিলে থেঁকারী (গোবিন্দ দাস)

life and that of society and he pins his faith in them. With his faith he feels stronger to face odds in his life. When he meets with failures and frustrations he conceales himself in his faith. Thus faith is a system of beliefs regarding nature, life and society. It gives mental strength and satisfaction. With this idea it is said about the Hindu women that (i) the mouth of a woman is always pure (V, 130) ; (ii) women must be honoured and adorned by their fathers, husbands, brothers and brothers-in-law, who desire their own welfare (111,55) ; (iii) where women are honoured, there the *Devas* (Gods) are pleased ; but where they are dishonoured, no sacred rite yields rewards (111,56) , (iv) where female relations live in grief, the family soon wholly perished ; but that family where they are not unhappy ever prospers (111, 57) ; (v) in the like manner, care must be taken of barren women, of those who have no sons, of those whose family is extinct, of wives and widows faithful in their lords, and of women afflicted with diseases (VIII, 28) ; (vi) a righteous king must punish like thieves those relatives who appropriate the property of such females during their lifetime (VIII, 29) ; (vii) in order to protect women and Brahmins, he who kills anybody, causes right and commits no sin, (VIII, 349) ; (viii) one's daughter is the highest object of tinderness , hence if one is offended by her one must bear it without resentment (IV, 185) ; (ix) a maternal aunt, the wife of a maternal uncle, a mother-in-law and a parental aunt must be honoured like the wife of one's spiritual teacher, they are equal to the wife of one's father and of one's mother but the mother is most venerable than they (11, 133) ; (x) but the teacher is ten times more venerable than the sub-teacher the father a hundred times more than a teacher, but the mother a thousand times more than the father, (11, 145) ; (xi) a chaste wife, who after the death of her husband constantly remains chaste, reaches heaven though she has no son, just like those chaste women (V, 160) ; (xii) in that family where the husband is pleased with his wife and the wife with her husband, happiness will assuredly be lasting (111, 60) ; (xiii) offspring, the due performance of religious rites, faithful service, highest conjugal happpiness, and heavenly bliss from the ancestors and one's self depend upon the wife along, (IX, 28) ; (xiv) let mutual fidelity continue till death ; this may be considered as a summary of the highest law for husband and wife (IX, 101).[19]

The acceptance of the womenfolk with such positions are nowhere found in Western idea. Their women are treated as a sex partner who according to a modern singer-composer, "I do not think women

19. Swami Abhedananda *India and his People*, Ramkrishna Vedanta Math, Calcutta.

help men to be stable. They always take more than they give. They oblige us to give them everything and if we agree, we find ourselves poor, drained out. They are physically much stronger than us, we do not satisfy them anymore, and off they go after some one else. They give us many things but not the stability."[20] This is not the conception of a Hindu about a woman which we have discussed in earlier pages. On the contrary, a Hindu believes that it is the woman who gives man stability and peace of mind if she is honest, chaste, cheerful and dutiful. She is always pure. In order to clarify Hindu points of view we have collected and compiled some data from oral traditional and ancient sources. They are potent enough to depict the position of women faithfully and to draw a meaningful generalisation from them is possible. Further instructions may also be quoted from the Hindu law-books about the Hindu women. It is said there,
(a) women are pure in all limbs; (b) man is strength, women is beauty, he is the reason that governs and she is the wisdom that moderates; (c) he who despises woman despises his mother; (d) the tears of woman call down the fire of heaven on those who make them flow; (e) he who is cursed by a woman is cursed by God; (f) evil to him who laughs at a woman's sufferings, God shall laugh at his prayers; (g) the songs of women are sweet in the ears of the Lord, men should not, if they wish to be heard, sing the praise of God without women; (h) there is no crime more odieus than to persecute women, and to take advantage to their weakness to despoil them of their partimony; (i) the woman watches over the house, and the protecting divinities (*Devas*) of the domestic hearth are happy in her presence; the labours of the field should never be assigned to her; (j) when relatives, by some subterfuge, take possession of property of a woman, her carriages or her jewels, such evil doer shall descend into the infernal regions. Here is a definition of a wife that has been given in the Mahabharata;

A wife is half the man, his truest friend;

A loving wife is a perpetual spring of Virtue, Pleasure, and Wealth,

A faithful wife is his best aid in seeking heavenly bliss;

A sweetly-speaking wife is the companion in solitude, a father in advice, a mother in all seasons of distress, a rest in passing through life's wilderness.

If we turn to Brahminic age we find that polyandry and *sayamvara* are alike ignored by Manu and so too in the sentiment that woman is

20. Singout, New York, 1968.

in anyway equal to the man. Manu says, "Women were created to be mother, and men to be father; it is there, ordained in the Veda, that religious rites should be performed by the husband together with the wife." But in every other direction the subordination of women is indicated. The duties of husband towards their wives are defined with significant fullness of details in folklore materials. In a folk sayings it is said that a married woman must be honoured and be adorned by everybody, if they would obtain abundant prosperity. A woman must always be in cheerful temper, devoting herself to the good management of the household, taking great care of the household furniture and children, keeping down all her expenses and educating her offsprings for fitting them in the world of living. Regarding the marriage of daughter Manu says, "Every man should give his daughter in marriage to an excellent man, youth of the same caste, even though she has not attained her age; but it is better that a damsel, though marriageable should stay at home until her death, rather than that her father should give her in marriage to a worthless bridegroom." Popular folksayings clarify the idea. For example, *anna dekhe debe ghee patro dekhe debe jhee*[21] which means, look for fine boiled rice before you serve ghee; find out a suitable bridegroom before you marry your daughter or *dasaputra sama kannya patra bujhee dele,* a daughter is equal to ten sons if she is married to a suitable bridegroom and so on. Again Manu says that a damsel may wait for 3 years after she is marriageable; and then if her father has not given her in marriage, she may choose herself a bridegroom of equal caste, when neither she nor her chosen husband commits any offence by that. But folk society has not accepted it so easily. There are a great many folk sayings where such marriages are condemned such as *bhat pai na bhatar chai, theke theke abar gayna chai,* she gets no meal but wishes for a husband, and from time to time she longs for jewellery as well or *adarbibir chadar gai bhat pai na, bhatar chai,*[22] dama love has a veil on her person; she goes without food but longs for a husband. From the hankering if she gets married the folk people do not mind to taunt her with the following saying *baap jane na, ma jane na hogal bane biye,* unknown to the parents she is being married in a swamp of reeds.

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21. অন্ন দেখে দেবে ঘি, পাত্র দেখে দেবে ঝি।
দশপুত্র সম কন্যা পাত্রে দেখে দিলে।

22. ভাত পায়না ভাতার চায়, থেকে থেকে আবার গয়না চায়।
আদর বিবির চাদর গায়, ভাত পাব না ভাতার চায়।
বাপ জানে না, মা জানে না, হোগল বনে বিয়ে।
ভাতার পেয়েই কত নয়, কাচের চুড়ি চায়।

The wife is considered to be a partaker and a partner in the spiritual life of her husband ; she is thus called in Sanskrit, *sahadharmini*, "spiritual helpmate". This idea is very old and as old as Hindu nation and it still stands good. It is true that in course of time certain prohibition for some women against certain studies and ceremonies were prescribed. But when the western historians say that the Hindu women are treated like slaves by their husbands and other elders they say that without considering the other side of the Hindu way of life in its correct perspective.

Indeed the position of women, as revealed in *Dharmasutra* is somewhat peculiar. On the one hand, she is regarded as ever pure, all her impurities being removed by her monthly illness ; while on the other, she has no higher status than the chattles belonging to the household.[23] According to Dharmashastras the observance of fast by a woman whose husband is alive. has been condemned most vehimently. Some have included women in the list of properties which are not lost by reason of their being enjoyed by others. Bodhayana declares that the wife is even more precious than wealth and as such, deserves more careful protection.

Then there is definite instruction as to how a wife might be abondoned. Following descriptions might abandon a wife :—

(a) barren in the 10th year of marriage ;
(b) bearing daughters only in 12 years ;
(c) all of whose children die in the 15 years ;
(d) uttering unpleasant words forthwith.

It has been suggested that a married lady should have great regard for her superiorus, particularly mother-in-law, father-in-law, and the husband. She must be reverential towards Gods and guests, she should keep the house in order, and lead a life of chastity and restraint. The housewife must have saving habit and be careful about the articles for domestic use. Practice of *Nulakriya*, decoration of ornament, and going to the house of strangers during the absence of husband are among the practices prohibited for a woman. Besides there are a certain taboos which we will see later, that she should practice as faithfully as possible.

It is said that a widow shall avoid during one year, or according to some six months only from her becoming a widow, the use of honey,

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23. Banerjee, S. C. Dharmasutra--a study in their origin and development, Calcutta, 1962

meat, spirituous liquor and salt and shall sleep on the ground. She or a woman who has no son may engage her *devara* for raising a son on herself. In the absence of *devara* she can utilise a person of the same caste. This *devara* or the husband's younger brother has a very sweet relation with his *bauthan*. It is equally popular in folk society which we known from the following song : *soner deora benche thak, deora more karlo pagal pran sahe na*,[24] Oh beloved younger brother of my husband, let you live long because it is you who have made me mad, I am unable to bear your gap.

In Aittereya Brahman (XII, 12, and XV, 3) it is said that man can have many wives but no woman can have more than one husband. This is the first authorative statement of polygamy, which was common enough during the Vedic period. This passage is very freely quoted in the later Smritis as a form of polygamy or *bahu bibaha*. This has affected a great many girls. This also brings conflicts such as *khete khete marlo dorani hal nere parsul sorani*,[25] the neglected queen dies hard work, while the beloved queen has given birth to an infant by sheer waving hands. Another saying, *ek barer stri heladola, dojbarer stri galarmala*, the first and the only wife of a man is not much cared for, but the second wife of a man is prized like a wreath of flower. So when a girl gets unhappy for marrying her to an old groom it is said, *gouri lo jhee tor kapale buro bar aami karbo ki*, O Gauri the daughter, it is loted to you for an old groom, what shall I do? This polygamy had wide sanction thus the king, it appears, had three kinds of wives with their distinctive appellation. The best kind was designed as *mahishi*.

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24. সোনার দেওরা বেঁচে থাক—
দেওরা মোরে করলে পাগল প্রাণ সহে না।

25. খেটে খেটে ম'রল দোরাণী, হাত নেরে পর'ফুল সোরাণী।

এক বরের স্ত্রী হেলা দোলা, দোজবরের স্ত্রী গলার মালা।

এক বরের ভাতারের মাগ চিংড়িমাছের পোসা।
দোজবরের ভাতারের মাগ নিত্যি করেন গোসা॥
তেজবরের ভাতারের মাগ সঙ্গে বসে খায়।
চার বরের ভাতারের মাগ কাঁধে চ'ড়ে যায়॥

গৌরী লো ঝি, তোর কপালে বুড়ো বর আমি করব কি?

—বাংলা প্রবাদ।

টাকা ভেঙে শঙ্খ দিলাম, কানে মদন-কড়ি।
বিয়ের বেলা দেখে এলুম বুড়োর চাপ দাড়ি॥
চোখ খাও গো বাপ মা, চোখ খাও গো খুড়ো,
এমন বরকে বিয়ে দিলে তামাক-খেগো বুড়ো॥
বুড়োর হুঁকো গেল ভেসে, বুড়ো মরে কেশে,
কেন গালিবার সময়, বুড়ো নেচে উঠেছে॥

Polygamy although sanctioned by law was prevalent mostly amongst the kings and the wealthier classes in those days besides the *kulins*. Some working people were polygamous too due to economic factor. These people utilised their wives as their helping hands in the working grounds.

Superstitions, taboos, beliefs and customs

In the following pages we will discuss some proverbs, sayings etc. which depict the position of the folk women in particular and Bengali folk women in general. Some facts about the Bengalee kinship taboos are given under : Foremost among the Bengalee kinship taboos are the elder brother-in-law (*Bhasur*) and the maternal-uncle-in-law (*Mamasasur*) taboos. These two types of kins are tabooed to a Bengalee wife and perhaps, to a wife of other Hindu communities. A housewife of Bengal must carefully avoid them. She must not show her face to them, or touch them, or speak to them, or utter their names or appear before them. On the other hand, the elder-brother-in-law or the maternal-uncle-in-law must not look at her face or touch her or speak to her except through an intermidiary. They must indicate their approach by some method or other so as to permit of decorous adjustment of her clothes or to give time to conceal herself in a corner.[26] In fact, there is complete inhibition of social intercourse between them. This is also true for the womenfolk of other regions of India which are evident from her regional folklore. Needless to mention that a hoast of scholar has stated that these are the primitive traits in culture. They corroborated their statements by concrete illustrations. Thus, a housewife of a peasant family addressing the elder brother of her husband says,

Rangila Bhasurgo tumi keno deyor haila na
tumi jadi haita re deyor khaita batar pan
(aar) ranga rase kaitam katha juraito paran

Hate jao bazare jao amar ekti katha
(ai) didir laigya pan supari amar alapata[27] etc.

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26. Bagchi, Prabodh Kumar "Female Folk-Rites in Bengal", Man-in-India, 1922.

27. রঙিলা ভাসুর গো, তুমি কেন দেওর হইলা না—
তুমি যদি হইতা রে দেওর, খাইতা বাটার পান।
(আর) রঙ্গ রসে কইতাম কথা, জুড়াইত পরাণ গো জুড়াইত পরাণ।
হাটে যাও বাজারে যাও আমার একটি কথা,
(ঐ) দিদির লইগ্যা পান সুপারী, আমার আলাপাতা। (পল্লীগীতি ও পূর্ববঙ্গ .

It means, the sportive elder brother of my husband why you were not his younger one instead of his being the elder. If you were his younger brother, you could have take betel from my stock, we could have engaged in amorous play and joke by each other and I could have satisfy my thirst and be pleased. Oh dear elder brother of my husband, wherever you go either in the *haat* or in the market, please bring for me tobacco and for your wife betel and betel nut.

This speaks as to how owing to husband's elder brother taboo the peasant woman inspite of her sincere love for the elder-brother-in-law is unable to expose herself to him. So she is taking the shelter of a curious song while talking to him. Similarly, some Andamani Islanders show a great deal of shyness in the presence of his younger brother's wife who is known as *bhadrabadhu* in Bengal. *Bhadrabadhus* should never communicate with their *bhasurs* except through an intermediary. This is also true in the tribal and caste people of India including Yokaghirs, a Sibarian tribe among whom there are rules forbiding conversation between the elder brother and the younger brother's wife. This taboo is also found among the Bihrors. Here is a saying where a housewife of a middle-class Hindu Joint-family addressing the wife of her husband's elder brother says, *ki balbo bhasur ghare, naile tor chele mor chele mare* ?[28] meaning what shall I do now, the elder brother of my husband is at home, or how dare your son to beat my son.

As because it is a taboo to speak before the elder brother of her husband she is tolerating his son who has beaten her own son. Being unable to check herself she has expressed that clearly and getting angried had lodged a complaint to her *ja* (husband's elder brother's wife). This is a very good illustration of the character of folk women. Necessary to mention that due to this taboo usually housewives have more feelings for their *devars* which can also be understood from the following sayings :

ato kalai bhate chotthakurer pate
ato dal diyeche bhate tabu nai bat-thakurer pate[29]

which means so much boild lentils, all in the plate of my husband's younger brother ; so much boiled lentils yet none in the plate of (her) husband's elder brother.

It is obvious. Since Vedic days Hindu women are allowed to keep pleasant relations with their *devars* when it is a taboo to talk freely with *bhasurs*. Naturally, faults are thick where love is thin. Inspite

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28. কি বলব ভাসুর ঘরে, নইলে তেরে ছেলে মেরে ছেলে মারে ? (বাংলা প্রবাদ)।
29. অত কলাই ভাতে ছোট ঠাকুরের পাতে।
অত ডাল দিয়েছি ভাতে, তবু নেই বট ঠাকুরের পাতে।

of taboos, sometime the wife of the younger brother need to talk to her *bhasur*. Here is an example of the conversation between the wife of the younger brother with husband's elder brother. Addressing the wall of the house she says the following words: *Kathkhan kathkhan battharkur ki pakal mash khan.*[30] Hallow the wall of the house, can you tell me whether the elder brother of my husband eat big fish ? The reply is *Khan khan khan, panch chhay khan, ekhan ektu tel pele naite jan.* Yes, he would like to take five to six pieces of fish but prior to that he would be pleased if he gets some oil for taking bath.

To a Hindu wife it is not only the names of her husband's elder brothers and maternal uncles are tabooed, but the names, of almost all of her husband's elder kin irrespective of their sexes are tabooed. She must not utter the name of her husband. If there be any occasion to mention his name she must either alter the intial letter of the name of her husband or paraphrase it. Thus if the name is *Kali* she must either change the name to *Nali, Tali, Bali,* etc. or use some such synonym as Syama, another name of the Goddess Kali. This name taboo is observed with such rigorous consistency that she will not utter any word which approaches the name in sound. Thus the wife will not say *Kal* meaning tomorrow or yesterday but will either pronounce it *Nal* or resort to some other means to indicate it (e.g. the day before today or the day after to day).

Now we come to son-in-law's house taboo. According to this taboo a Bengalee mother-in-law must not visit her son-in-law's house till he gets his offspring. But this taboo does not involve any repture of social intercourse with the family of the son-in-law and the mother-in-law. He will behave towards her exactly in the same way as he behaves towards his own mother. The mother-in-law too behave with his son-in-law as her own son.[31]

Then there are superstitions about the concealment of name. Here is a Sycilian legend where we know that Rozella, a woodcutter's daughter marries the God of love, who become bird during the day time and a man at night. Rozella insists on knowing the name of her husband. The husband requests him not to insist on the same because once the name is divulged it would lead to misery and destruction. Still she is not satisfied. Ultimately he tells his name to her and disappears. From this incident she began to suffer from proverty and lonliness all her life.[32] There is a Konkan variant of the same legend which goes thus :

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30. কাথখান কাথখান—বট ঠাকুর কি পাকাল মাছ খান ?
—খান খান খান, পাঁচ ছয়খান, এখন একটু তেল পেলে নাইতে যান।
31. Bagchi, Prabodh Kumar op. cit.
32. Bhagvat, Durga, op. cit.

A princess got married to a stranger, a prince. She insists on knowing his name. He did not want to divulge his name for obvious reason but on her insistance he tells her that his name is Nagadeva. As soon as he utters his name he assumes the cobra-form and disappears under the ground. The girl repents and prays to God for being united with her husband. She ultimately got the boon and was able to unite with her husband as a female-snake. The custom of not uttering the name of the serpent at night is current throughout India. It can also be found in the Kathasaritsagar that prince Vajramukha falls in love with Padmavati at first sight and wants to know her name and whereabouts. Padmavati reciprocates his feelings. She expresses her thoughts by gestures. She puts a lotus on her ear, thereby showing that her name is Padmavati and her country is Karnatak (ear is *karna*). She then holds the flower in between her teeth, indicating thereby that her father's name is Dantaghataker. (teeth means *danta*). But she never speaks to about her name and whereabouts.[33] From all these one can easily understand that generally no husband or wife of Hindu society calls each other by name.

There are, however, certain occasions when they are forced by female relations to break the taboo by way of jokes and in that cases they pray to God for His execusing them. In the western districts of the northern India young married women go on the festivals of the Salon and Tij to a tank to worship there. When they have done the worship, some old women seized a young wife by the nose and threatens to rub it until she mentions her husband's name. Many will stand the pain than to submit ; but if a young bride complies, she is laughed at, but does not incur any serious reproach for this occassion only. The reason is that the taboo is broken in the immediate presence of the water deities, who are more disposed to lengthen than to shorten the life of the husband of a woman who worships them. Then in Gorakhpur (Uttar Pradesh) on the day of *Govardhan Puja,* in the month of Kartik (Oct.-Nov.), while worshipping the cow-dung image of Govardhan women name each other of their male relations, including their husbands.' Each name is uttered with some abusive epithet. But the name of the husband is mentioned only in a whisper, without many insulting phrase.[34] Tamil women are reluctant to mention their husband's name. The custom is not only confined to Tamil society but also is observed more or less by almost all the Hindu inhabitants of India and Ceylon. (*Continued*)

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33. Tawney, C. H. The Kathasaritsagara, or the Ocean of the Streams of Story, 2 vols. reprinted by Munshiram Mohoharlal, Delhi, 1968.

34. North Indian Notes and Querries, ed. W. Crooke & Punjab Notes and Querries, 1882

PRAPHULLADATTA GOSWAMI

FOLKTALES OF THE MIRIS

LIKE other peoples of Assam Miris too have interesting folktales. As some of the Miris have retained a rather close community life, myths and explanatory tales still play a clear role in either determining their attitude towards the unseen and seen worlds or in controlling their beliefs and activity. Some of their beliefs find echoes among other plainsmen of the land. For instance, it is a widespread belief that if one takes away a fish caught by a fish-eagle one is likely to lose a son. Miris explain the origin of the belief in this manner: In olden days God decided to make the fish-eagle king over all birds. So he asked the bird to observe a fast of two days. It failed to keep the fast. So God cursed the bird. "You will get a fish to eat only if you keep a fast of twelve days." The crestfallen fish-eagle said, "If someone snatches away the fish I catch at the end of twelve days, I'll have to starve. What'll I do then?" God said, "I can't revoke my curse, but if anyone takes away the fish you catch, he will lose his son."

This myth has a sequel, in a test taken by God in order to find a bird fit to be king. God prepared a cauldron of boiling oil and said, "Whichever bird is able to take a dip in the oil would be considered for the kingship." While the other birds delayed taking the test, the slim drongo swooped into the oil and flew out proving its competence to be king. Because the bird took a bath in boiling oil it turned black, but it now is so bold that it even pursues larger birds like crows and kites and drives them off. An Assamese proverbial saying which refers to a person who is irresolute or who shilly-shallies, goes somewhat like this: "Ah, while you did up and dressed, the drongo has already become king." The tale has an Ao Naga analogue.

This tale explains why the drongo is black; certain other tales explain why human beings do not see the gods, why monkeys live in jungles, why swine live under their raised houses while dogs live in them (this has Ao Naga and Wancho parallels), why leeches and mosquitoes suck human blood, why Miris have no letters, and so on. The myth explaining how Miris lost their letters has an Abor version, indicating that Miris and Abors have certain things in common. It has also parallels among Garos and certain tribes in South-east Asia. Daying Ba-bu, the god of wisdom, gave to human beings speech and then

asked them to take the letters with which they could write down their speech. The ancestor of the Miris took down the letters on a deerskin. He kept the deerskin in the loft and forgot all about it. Much later, one day when he had nothing to eat, he took down the skin, roasted it in the fire and ate it up. Thus the letters were lost. The Mois of Annam explain their illiteracy in this manner: "When the Great Spirit told all the nations to bring writing materials, on which the alphabets would be inscribed, the Mois, with typical improvidence, instead of providing tablets of stone or even wood, turned up with a piece of deerskin, which later, complete with alphabet, was eaten up by the dogs." (N. Lewis, A Dragon *Apparent*, p. 89).

All over India we find animal tales in which one animal tries to outwit another. The fox figures prominently in such tales, for instance, in the Assamese "The Fox and the Monkey". In a Kachari tale the place of the fox is occupied by a hare. The hare is tricked by a monkey and the latter is also triked by the no less clever hare. Certain motifs in the Miri tale "The Monkey and the Tiger" recall parts of the Assamese and Kachari parallels. In the Miri tale the monkey eats up some fruits and gives his friend the tiger only the peels. So the tiger invites him to get some honey from a beehive on a tall tree. The bees bite the intruder and he drops down in a miry place. As he cannot get out of the mire the monkey entreats the tiger thus, "I am sorry for what I did to you. Please save me now. Instead of allowing me to die here in the mire you as well take me out and eat me." The tiger takes him at his word and wants to eat him, but he says, "I'm muddy all over, why not get me washed?' When he is washed and cleaned he says, "Let me dry my body in the sun while you go to that village, get some fire so that you can roast me, have a tasty meal." As the tiger leaves for the village, the monkey climbs up a tree and escapes.

In the second part of the Kachari tale, the monkey is saved by a tiger, but the tiger there is cleverer, for when the monkey escapes to a tree, the tiger feigns death and lies on the ground unmoving. The monkey finding his enemy dead dances and puts his head into the open jaws of the apparently dead tiger, who suddenly closes his mouth.

Formula tales are rather few in Assam. In such tales the form is fixed, one incident following close on another according to a set pattern. The incidents go on accumulating till the climax, then there is a turning back to the earlier incidents. "Why the back of the toad is full of warts" is a formula tales. It can be summarised in this manner: Once noon a bat was eating seeds in a tree. A frog suddenly croaked and frightened it. The bat flew away and frightened a squirrel who was nibbling at the berry of a palm. The squirrel ran away and a berry

dropped on a barking deer. The frightened barking deer ran away knocked off a bamboo. The bamboo hit a crab and broke its leg. In severe pain the crab moved away and bit off the tail of a snake. In pain the snake rushed up to the nest of a tailor bird and ate up its eggs. The weeping tailor bird approached the public to give it justice. So all came and sat in an assembly. The snake was hauled up, but it said, "I am blameless. It is because the crab bit off my tail that I ate up the tailor bird's eggs." So the crab was brought up. In this way the incidents are gone over backwards and ultimately the crime is placed on the shoulder of the frog. The assembly poured hot ashes on the back of the frong as a punishment, and since then its back is full of warts. The tale has Mikir and Kuki parallels.

Miris have other kinds of tales too, for instance, tales illustrative of a belief in fate and wisdom. One day God's wife said to him, "Why don't you bestow wealth on that unfortunate person?" God said, "An unfortunate person can never acquire wealth." To prove the point he poured gold coins into the boat of the man. The latter thought there must have fallen a larger amount of gold coins in his yard. So he left his boat and ran home as fast as he could. There was no gold in his yard, nor did he find the coins in his boat. This is about fate, and who does not lean on fate sometimes?

Here is a tale on a more realistic plane and which illustrates the truth that one should not plant anything on the boundary of one's field. Ngate and Narah had a common boundary where Ngate planted a pumpkin seedling. The plant spread into Narah's field and bore fruits. Narah's wife took away the fruits and this led to a feud between the neighbours. One day Narah invited Ngate to a drink. Ngate drank too much and while he remained intoxicated, his host carried off his cattle. When he came to Ngate realized that it was the pumpkin plant raised on he boundary which led to this feud and to this trickery.

Miri folktales have not been recorded to any considerable extent, only a few having seen print. If they are recorded we will find in them many features in common with tales recorded in other parts of Assam, thus showing evidences of give and take among the various cultural groups of the state. I have already pointed to certain similarities with Assamese and Kachari folktales. To give another instance, the Miri tale of *Lightning and Thunder* is substantially the same as the Kachari *Roana and Raoni.* In both a brother develops a unsual passion for his sister, the latter being unwilling to marry him escapes up into the sky. The fair-skinned sister fleeing from her brother is the lightning while the brother who pursues crying and shouting is the thunder. The tale of a Lightning Girl is found also in Western India.

BOOK-REVIEW

TALES FROM THE RAJATARANGINI by S. L. Sadhu, Kapoor Brothers, Srinagar 1967. Demy, VIII+198. Rs. 12.50.

The author is well-known for his first-book "Folktales from Kashmir" and the book under review is in a sense a companion volume to that. It is a collection of 33 tales with a foreword by Mr. G. M. Sadiq, Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir. Appendix and glossary etc. are also included with the book. The present book according to the author is "based mainly on the *Rajatarangini* of Kalhana, along with its complements which bring the account down to 1587 A.D., and the *Twarikhi Kashmir* by Pir Hassan Shah". It is, he writes again, "not meant to be a contribution to the study of history. Its interest is different. Besides being a chronicle of great celebrity of the *Rajatarangini* is a composition in poetry. Kalhana regarded himself more as a poet than a historian, and his work as *kavya*, an exercise in poetic composition, the tales herein set down add spice to the narrative of monarchs."

This selection naturally follows the reviewers own lives of interest and it is, of course, that with a slight change of angle are altogether different choice might be made. On the whole this volume presents a substantial contribution of folk-tale studies. Certainly these tales have a refreshing variety and "The pith and marrow of the chronicle thus becomes accessible to the reader in a form that is lucid, crisp and enjoyable" said G. M. Sadiq in his foreword. Prof. Sadhu deserves every praise for the book under review and earlier works on regional folktale of India. We wish more such works from him.

—Shibnarayan Kabiraj.

LOK-DHARMA PRADARSHANKARI KALYEN (In Hindi), by Devilal Samar, Bharatiya Lok Kala Mandal, Udaipur, Rajasthan, Rs. 15.00 (1969).

The book under review is a fine example of the folk entertainmental aspect which is characterised by different chapters in the following three sections: (a) *loksangeet* (folk song) (b) *loknritya* (folk dance) & (c) *loknatak* (folk drama). The author has described the definition of meaning in terms of prior meaning-relations (incompatibility, hyponymy etc.) the definition and equivalence and statement of the meaning relations for specified contexts, and not for the folklore as a whole. It is certainly one of the most important contributions to the regional folklore study and we wish its wide popularity.

—Samir Ghosal.

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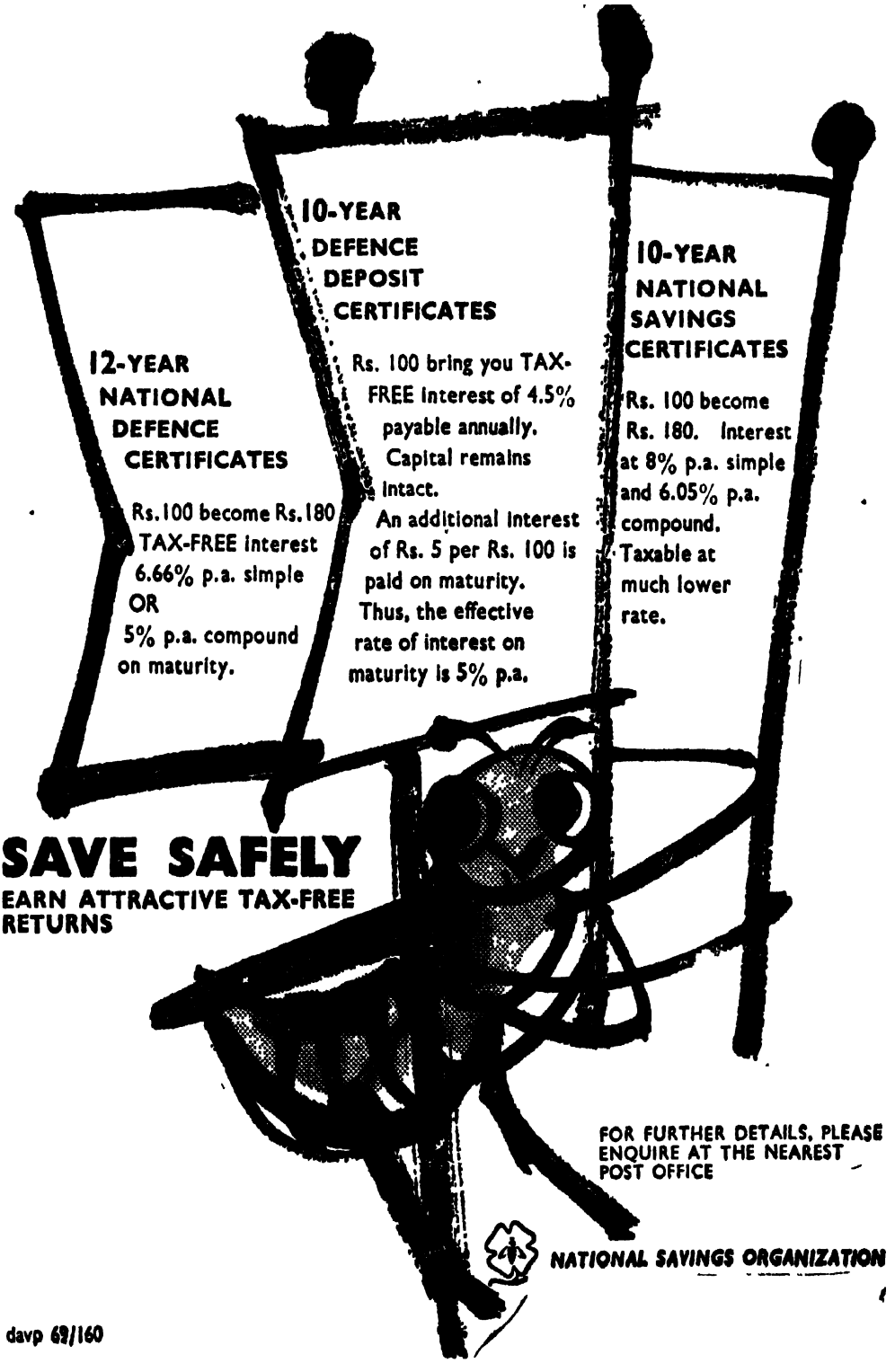
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SANKAR SEN GUPTA

WOMEN IN ANCIENT LITERATURE AND FOLKLORE

(Continued from previous issue)

Here is a pregnancy custom that is interesting to note. The husband of a wife pregnant for the first time should not look at an eclipse of the sun or the moon. If he violates this rule his child will be maimed in some way. Hare lip in particular is caused by the neglect of this precaution is believed by a number of Indian folk people even today. This is also in force among certain original people of Malayasia which we know from Tom Harrison.

Then there are charms to make delivery easy. On the sacred plain of Kurukshetra, near New Delhi where the great battle of the Mahabharata was fought, there stood a fort popularly known as Chaka-bu-ka Killa. The fort is no longer in existence, but its site is pointed out by the extraordinarily large bricks that are sometimes dug out at a little depth from the surface, and which are believed to have formed part of the fort. Popular belief imparts a very great efficacy to these bricks. In cases of difficult or protracted labour, a piece of one of these bricks is dipped in a small quantity of water, which is given to the patient to drink, and it has the effect of relieving the pain and making delivery easy. Sometimes, something like a labyrinth or a maze, is drawn on a dish (*thali*) which is first drawn by the patient and then washed with water, then it is given to the patient to drink. This water is also credited with the same efficacy as that in which a brick-piece has been dipped. This is observed by the Hindus.[35]

Below is a Muslim custom. Here the following couplet is written on an earthen plate and it is placed on the head of the lying-in-woman to facilitate delivery.

Likh kar chapri sir par dhari
Nikal para ya nikal pari[36]

35. Ibid.

36. Kabiraj, Shibnarayan, "Hindu and Muslim Women in Folk Custom, Rites and Tradition" *in* "Women in Indian Folklore", Calcutta, 1969.

The woman then gives birth to a boy or a girl.

There are also charms that predict the sex of an expecting child. Following is an example :

Treble the letters of the woman's name; add to the number of the letters the name of the country in which the woman lies; divide the whole by 8; if the remainder is even, the baby will be a daughter; if odd, a son.*

---

*There are more such ideas which goes as *Khanar Vacan* in Bengal. The following is an example :

গ্রাম গর্ভিনী ফুলে যুতা। তিন দিয়ে হয় পুত।।
একে পুত, দু'য়ে সুতা। শুন্য হলে গর্ভ মিথ্যা।।

It means that the words of the name of the village and the words of the pregnant woman together with the words of the name of a flower which the pregnant woman may utter during the counting hour are to be added together. The total will then be divided by number 3. If the remainder is 1, the expected child will be a son, if 2, a daughter and if O, abortion will take place.

It is interesting to note that scientifically, no doctor can guarantee the birth of a son or a daughter to order. But modern research gives hope that in due course it will become possible to choose the sex of one's baby. A Soviet Veterinary surgeon Victor Shulov has discovered a simple, effective method of determining, a sex ratio in animal births.

In biology both sexes are needed for procreation, and |Nature keeps an equal balance between males and females. This law of parity manifests itself unfailingly among mammals, where the ratio of male and female in the overall population is approximately 1 : 1.

The chemical composition of the blood of a pregnant female undergoes substantial changes. Specifically, what are known as gonadotropins—the hormones affecting the sex glands, called gonads—multiply and function with increased intensity. The experiment showed that the gonadotropins of one biological species are capable of stimulating the activity of the internal secretion glands of another, even though remote biologically. Experience shows that the sex ratio in the litter of one species, while remaining on the whole close to 1 : 1, deviates from this standard in individual cases. The reasons for such deviations are many and include the parents' age and hereditary predisposition. To ascertain the scope and frequency of such deviations in natural conditions, Shulov conducted a thorough inspection of some 10,000 lambs which were the offspring of 6,000 sheep, all previously divided into age groups and subsequently fertilized by rams of one age. A statistical analysis revealed that natural factors cause minor and infrequent shifts in the sex ratios of the litter. The preparation made from the blood of mares pregnant with male embryos was called MGS (male gonadotropic serum). He also prepared FGS (female gonadotropic serum) from the blood of mares pregnant with female embryos. An injection of MGS in the sheep markedly increased the proportion of male lambs in their litter, bringing the ratio up to 2 : 1, while an injection of FGS, on the contrary, cut it down to 1 : 2. An injection of the serum in the sire rams shook the parity law. Ewes impregnated by rams injected with MGS brought 142 male lambs to 100 ewe lambs (the sex porportion changing to almost 3 : 2). An injection of FGS led to a shift in the opposite direction : instead of 142, only 63 male to 100 female offspring were obtained (the proportion being almost 3 : 5. In a

There is a custom which is known as nose-boring of sons amongst Hindus all over India. A woman whose sons have died, get the nose of her new born son bored and puts on it a nose-ring, indicative of the fact that the child is not a boy but a girl. It is a general belief that women live longer than men. Even Yama, the god of death, likes a boy than a girl. This indicates the lower position of women. The nose-ring is worn till marriage, when it is removed by the bride's mother, or in her absence by some other elderly female relation. A gift in money is made to the bride-groom after this removal. Sometime the person concerned performs different rites and pujas on this occasion.

Vrata ritual :

We now narrate certain vrata rites to illustrate the position of women of Bengal. More details about the same will be available in different other places.[37] There are a series of rites and ceremonies which are essentially based on the Hindu sastras. But there are others which can claim no such authority but they are popular and powerful enough to mould the folk-society. These are known as *vratas*. Before a woman perform vrata rituals, she should get the sanction from the father if she is a maiden, from the husband if she is a married woman and her husband is alive, from the sons if she is a widow, according to Manu. But the folk-women do not always abide by the doctrines of Manu; they do not generally observe the laws that Manu said about the vrata rites. They take the decision by themselves whenever they perform such rites and rituals.

Abanindranath Tagore in his "Banglar Brata" has classified

third varient the experiments the serum was injected in both rams and ewes. The MGS increased the number of male lambs and the FGS the number of ewe lambs. In the first case the proportion was one female to two males : in the second, one male to two females.

In the opinion of experts, the importance of Shulov's work goes far beyond the practical aspects of sheep-breeding and animal husbandary in general. Sex ratio control is one of the most challenging problems facing biology including human biology. Hardly any expectant parents have ever remained indifferent to whether they would have a boy or a girl. In our days the sex of a baby can be discovered in advance through involved laboratory investigations at an early stage of pregnancy.

("Male or Female ?" by R. Nasyrov, *Sputnik*, November, 1969)

37. Tagore, Abanindranath "Banglar Vrata", (Visva-Bharati), Calcutta, Bagchi, Prabodh Kumar, "Female Folk-Rites in Bengal, *Man-in-India*, 1922, Chakravarti, Chintaharan, "The Hindu Rituals, Calcutta, 1957, Sen, Gopinath, "Rituals of Womenfolk of Bengal." *Indian Folklore*, 1959, Sen, D. C. "Glimpse of Bengali Life," Calcutta, 1915, Ray, Kamini Kumar, "Laukik Savdokosh," Calcutta, 1958, and Ray, S. K. "Vrata Rituals of Bengal," Calcutta, Chakravarti, Sunil "*Rarer Paus Aylano*" (The festival of Paus) in the book "Lokayata Bangla," Calcutta, 1969 etc.

these vratas under three groups. 1. Shastric vrata ; 2. Nari vrata and 3. Kumari vrata. This is not a comprehensive classification. These vratas can be brought under two board divisions : (i) Shastric and (ii) Prachalita, i.e. those in vogue amonst the femalefolk.

Unmarried girls from 5 to 6 or 8 to 9 years of age perform certain vratas which are popularly known as Kumari vrata. Their performances consist in the representation of desires by drawings, diggings of miniature tanks, etc. and the offering of flowers to the gods or the goddesses for the attainment of desired end, and last of all in listening to the *katha* or ritual tale, if there be any. The purpose of this type of vratas is to get better wed in general. The priest and his incantations have no place here. Let us mention *haricharan vrata.* Haricharan Vrata i.e., to worship the feet of Lord Hari who is the protector of the world. This is performed in the month of *Baisakh* (April-May). Woman who worships Him will have to give a pair of gold or silver sandal, one pair of new cloth and napkin to one who acts as priest.[38] It is to be noted here that there is no need for a priest or a Brahmin for certain vratas and in general it is the womenfolk themselves who act as priests or perform vratas on their own where no priest is necessary. For example, in the Bhaduli Vrata or Bhadrali Vrata which starts in the month of Bhadra (Aug.-Sept.) young girls while going to nearest pond recite couplet of following type : "O River, O River, That will meet here, The Goddess of the Rain, Will put an end to unhappiness."

Thus, they recite various types of *chharas* and pray to the Rain God for better lot of their brother, father, husband and so on.[39]

Next we come to the month of Aswin and Kartik (Oct.-Nov.-Dec.) when the women of Bengal perfom Durga Sasthi Vrata, Saubhagya Chaturthi Vrata, Jitastami Vrata, Yampukur Vrata, Kulkulati Vrata[40] etc. All these vratas have got their individuality are handed down from mother to daughter.

Suvachani Vrata belongs to the special domain of the married women. No priests are required for the performance of this Vrata or any of the rites connected with it. It is performed on Sundays or Thursdays in the early hours of the morning. The female devotee takes the vow in the previous day praying to the Goddess Suvachani for the welfare of some of her particular relatives e.g. for the cure from

38. Bagchi Prabodh Kumar, op. cit.
39. Sen, Gopinath, op. cit.

নদী, নদী কোথায় যাও ? বাপ-ভাইয়ের বার্তা দাও, সোয়ামি-শ্বশুরের বার্তা দাও।

or, সাগর, সাগর বন্দি, তোমার সঙ্গে সন্ধি। ভাই গেছেন বাণিজ্যে, বাপ গেছেন বাণিজ্যে, সোয়ামি গেছেন বাণিজ্যে, বাপ, ভাই, সোয়ামীর নিরাপদ।

40. Ibid.

some serious illness, for success in examination, sometimes in litigation, for the safe arrival of some relatives from a distant place, for the fulfilment of some desires and the type things. The devotee sits facing the east and invokes the goddess with *dhyanmantra.* The ceremony ends with the distribution of betel leaves, betel nuts, sweetmeats etc. to the invited ladies and girls. These are practistd by the grown-up ladies after marriage.

Folktale and legends :

In the following pages we will deal with a few folktales :

Once there was a woman who was such a good wife that she was known as *Pativrata* or "the devoted spouse". One day she was pounding rice when her husband came in and asked for a glass of drinking water. She dropped the pounder in the middle of a stroke and as the blessing of the Gods was upon her, it remained hanging suspended in the air as it was. A woman of the neighbourhood who happened to be there saw the miracle and was astonished. "How can this be ?" she asked. "This comes from the devotion to my husband", she answered.

Her friend came home and said to her husband : "The next time when I will pounder rice you ask me for a glass of drinking water and I will prove to you what a devoted spouse I am." He did so, but she instead of being able to keep the pounder in the middle of a stocke caused it fall on the head of her husband which broke his skull. The husband naturally cried out. On hearing the cry all the neighbours ran up, beat and abused her, and one of them made the following verse :

Pativarata jo nari hoe
Musal aisase tange soe
Kulta hoye pativrata chal
Apne pati ke phore bhal.[41]

(A devoted wife can keep the grain pounder suspended in the air but if a vicious woman tries to imitate her, she breaks her husband's forehead).

The next story speaks of Banke Chhail and his wife :

Once there was a Mussalman gentleman whose wife was such shrewd that every morning she used to give him a sound beating with her slipper. She had a daughter and when she grew up her parents were on the look out for a husband for her ; but the temper of her mother was so well-known that no one would dare to marry into such a family. Finally, one day a notorious character, who was known as

41. NIN & Q, op. cit.

Banke Chhail, came and proposed for the girl, and her father was so glad to settle her in life that he agreed to the match at once. They were married.

Before the marriage ceremony took place Banke Chhail brought a parrot, a cat, and a dog, and when he was taking his bride home he took his animals too with him. On the way, the pair sat down by a well for a rest when a number of village dogs came out and began to bark at Banke Chhail's dog. His dog barked at them in return and his master said, "Do you dare to bark without my leave?" Saying so he punished his dog. This astonished his wife; but they went on a little father and as the morning broke the birds in the trees began to sing. As soon as the parrot heard them, it commenced to chatter. Banke Chhail at once pulled it out of the cage and wrung its neck. "You fool", said he, "you did not remember that you belonged to Banke Chhail and you dare open your mouth without his order!"

His wife was still more surprised, but she said nothing and they went on. They sat down to rest in a garden and soon a rat appeared. Banke Chhail called to his cat and said: "Catch me that rat." The cat at once obeyed his order and killed it. This annoyed Banke Chhail. He said, "You fool, you dare to kill the rate without my leave; I ordered you to catch the rat", saying so, he killed the cat. When his wife saw all these she began to think to herself, "What a terrible husband I have got. It would be well for me to obey him." And when they reached home she found it to be of her interest to obey him in all things. Thus she became a very loving and obedient wife, so much so, that when sometime after her father came to pay her a visit, she looked out through *achnik* in the door and was afraid to admit him without the leave of her husband. By and by, Banke Chhail came home and said to her, "Your respected father is waiting at the door, why did you not let him in?" "How could I do so without your leave?" she answered. Then Banke Chhail went out and brought his father-in-law in. When he saw how changed his daughter was, he said to his son-in-law: "You know what a life my wife obliges me to live. I wish you would tell me the secret how you succeeded in tutoring your wife to behave. Perhaps I may be able to deal with my wife in the same way." Said Banke Chhail, "Good sir, bring a brick and some moist clay and make me a lamp saucer out of that." "It is easy," quoth he, "to mould the soft clay, but when the clay gets hard no power on the earth could mould." "In short," said Banke Chhail, "your wife's character is fixed and cannot be mended. I dealt with my wife in season and you see the result.[42] Hearing all these the old man went home sorrowful.

42. Ibid.

There is a Bengali proverb that indicate the idea : *kancha na noaile bansh pakle kare tash tash,*[43] meaning, strike while the iron is red or bend the tree while it is tender. There is another saying in which it is said, *jhee jabdo shile, bau jabdo kile* which means maidservant can be taught a lesson with a grinding stone, and the daughter-in-law when set at fisticuffs.

It may not be out of place to mention here in this connection that different aspects of social life are depicted in proverb which we will see in the appendices. It will be seen that no aspect of daily life are absent from the creation of the folk-poets. Folksayings and proverbs either describe some basic facts of the folk life and living or they are used for making fun of to ridicule some one. In the observation of the folk poets the peasants, milkmen, weavers, oilmen, blacksmiths, Kayasthas, Vaidyas, Faquirs, Pirs, maidservants, Hindu-Muslim relations, tenants, *rayats,* zamindars, thives, decoits, pilferers, poor, rich, capitalists, businessmen, beggers, unemployed, ghosts, witch, one-eyed, etc. have taken their real forms. However, we were discussing some aspects of folktales and legends here. Let us, therefore, proceed to that. Below is another story that describes the position of a soldier and his virtuous wife.

Once upon a time there was a soldier who had a beautiful wife, but he was very poor. At last his wife said, "My dear husband, our wealth is gone. What is the use of our living like this any longer ? You had better go abroad and earn money for our support."

"How can I go abroad without money for the journey ?" he asked. "It is bad," she said, "to eat on charity in the house of the father-in-law. I will get money for you from there and then you can go abroad and seek your fortune." The soldier agreed to the proposal. When he was on the way to go she asked him, "How shall either of us know if the other has ceased to love ?"

"How can I provide for this ?" he asked.

So she went to the garden and picking up two buds of Chameli, came to him and said, "Let each of us keep one of these buds, and whichever of us leaves another his or her bud will blossom."

When he was starting, she put on her finest clothes and was taking leave of him, but he turned away from her. She fancied that he did not like her dress, so she went and changed it for another. But even then he turned away his face from her. She was grieved and said, "My dear husband, what have I done that you have lost your love for me ?"

43. কাঁচা না নোয়াইলে বাঁশ, পাকলে করে টাস টাস।
ঝি জব্দ শিলে, বউ জব্দ কিলে।

"Fine dress," he answered, "does not befit the wife of a soldier he said. "Take my sword and shield. Now give me the shield and hit me as hardly as you can with the sword."

She did as he told her, but he parried all her blows. Then he said "Keep these arms and in time of need use them to protect your virtues."

With this advice he left her and went to a distant city, where he took service with a Raja and guarded the gate of his palace. Everyday he used to look at the Chameli bud which he kept tied up in his turban. One morning the Raja was sitting at his gate and saw the soldier looking at the bud. He was curious, and sent one of his servants to see what the soldier was looking at. The soldier said, "I do my duty honestly, what concern the Raja has with my private affairs ?"

The Raja became still more curious and himself going to the soldier asked him about it. The soldier told about the buds. Soon after the Raja went on his travel and came to the city in which the soldier lived. He was a man of dissolute habits, so he sent for an old woman and told her to bring the most beautiful woman in the city to see him. She went to the wife of the soldier and proposed to her that she should visit the Raja. She agreed to go for four lakhs of rupees, but the Raja gave her five lakhs, she kept him engaged in conversation for some time, and when he tried to approach her she drew her sword, fell upon him and wounded him seriously.

When he recovered from his wounds he came back to his own city. Coming to the palace the Raja called his guard and told him all that happened. He showed him all his wounds that was the work of his wife. The Raja approved of her fidelity to the husband and advanced him some money so that he could go back to his beloved. The soldier did as the Raja desired.[44]

Another story describes the fate of a shrewish wife :

Once there was a wife who was so cruel that every morning she used to say to her mother-in-law : "You wretched widow, may I see the day when your face is blackened, your hair is shaved and you are led round city mounted on an ass." To this, the old woman would say "As long as my son is kind to me you can do no evil to me. *Parameswar* grant that he may never come under your influence." Once the wife began to moan and complained of internal pain. When her husband came and asked what he could do for her, she said, "This desase is very difficult to cure. The only remedy is that you get your mother's head shaven, her face blackened and her led round the city on the back of an ass.".

44. ibid.

The husband went at once to his wife's mother and said, "Your daughter is sick unto death and it has been announced by the astrologer that she will never recover unless you allow your head to be shaved, your face blackened and are carried on the back of an ass around the city." When she heard this the old woman wept sore; but her affection for her daughter was great so she allowed to be done to her that son-in-law had said. When the procession reached the house of her daughter, her husband went in and said to his wife, "Come and see, we have done the same as you desired". On this she pretended that pain had left her and she came out. Taking her own mother as her mother-in-law she cried :

Dekh mai ki chali
Seer mundi, murh kali

(See how your mother comes, hair shaven face blackened).

To this her husband replied,

Dekh nari pher pheri
Ma meri hai ki teri[45]

(Look again wife, whether it is my mother or thine).

Facing reality she was overwhelmed with shame. From this time the wife gave up his shrewishness.

This story also provides another fact, how a mother feels for her daughters. She is ever ready to undertake any amount of trouble for the welfare of her daughter.

All these illustrate the position of women in different walks of their life. We will make another treatment of some of their roles later. Prior to that we will mention some songs that reflect the character and attitude of a newly wedded girl and her relatives in her new home.

Folksongs and sayings :

There are different types of songs that depict the position of women in the society and family. Let us place an example where a girl who has just got married and come to her in-law's house. She is a newcomer and her conduct is under the searching scrutiny of almost everyone in the family. There are every vigilant eyes of the mother-in-law and sister-in-law from which there is no escape. In this new set-up

45. ibid.

she can only depend on her husband. Besides, her *devar* (husband's younger brother) and *bhabiji* (husband's elder brother's wife) are also dependable. Here is a song that reflects the affection between *bhabiji* and *nanad* (husband's younger or elder sister).

Between the nanad and bhabiji
What a happy bond there is
There is none like it anywhere
For while we have been parted
And I feel like crying
When I remember her.[46]

The following is a song that speaks of casteism and love affairs. Here a girl of an upper caste family addressing his lover who belongs to a lower caste says,

If you are willing
And I am willing too
What would castes do ?

The mystery of love is ancient and incomprehensible. So it is said *piriter nao pahareo chale,* the boat of love can sail in the hill. And love is a heavenly bliss so there is a popular saying : *pirit aar git jorer kaj nai,* the love and the song cannot be had by force. Although it is said that *pirit jakhan jote futkalai fote, pirit jakhan chote, dhenkite fele kote*[47] which means when love appears it gushes like peas frying, when it goes out one is pounded, as it were, in the husking machine. There fore for the attainment of its success it is prepared to enter into any argument. Thus, as soon as she enters into a family after undergoing all sorts of hardships of the love affairs she attains the position of a housewife, and as soon as she gets a child she attains the positions of a mother, for which she is ever proud of. It is in the womenfolk, one gets his wife or lady-love, and it is in her he again gets his mother, who possesses the highest status and position in the society.

Love often disobeys social dictum. It has also challenged caste barrier. There are sound advice for a newly wedded wife. The following song is collected from the Bhal region of Gujarat. When the daughter leaves for her husband's home following is the song that is sung :

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46. **Barua, Hem op. cit.**

47. পীরিতের নাও পাহাড়েও চলে।
পীরিত আর গীত জোরের কাজ নয়।
পীরিত যখন জোটে ফুটকলাই ফোটে,
পীরিত যখন ছোটে ঢেঁকিতে কেলে কোটে।

"Veil your face before father-in-law
fall at your mother-in-law's feet
speak humbly to your husband's elder brother
do not quarrel with his sister.
His younger brother is the pet of the house
suffer his teasing
and lay your hands in
blessings on his younger
sister when she leaves
to be married.[48]

The husband is going away to a distant place in connection with service or business but the wife does not like it. She says, "My sweetheart, why do you go abroad ?"

Don't you forget to write a piece of paper ;
The pangs of separation wring my heart.
My sweetheart please come home in the months of rains.
Lest you catch cold in that wet season.
When I go to the gardens I feel so happy ;
But coming home I burn to ashes ![49]

She feels lonely without the husband. Even she is not getting his letter for the last twelve years. And then a letter comes to her for which she waited long. The song goes thus :

Oh my dear husband, you have gone so far,
Far in the south country ;
Here in this banyan grove
while fetching water from the well
everyday, I feel for you.

48. Jadav, J. D. "Folk-life and folk-songs of the Bhal Region," *Folklore*, Vol. 1. No. 4, July-August, 1960.

49. Patel, Madhubhai "Some aspects of Gujarati folksongs," *Folklore*, Vol. II. No. 6, Nov-Dec., 1961.

and also

ভার্যেকচারিণী-গৃহবিস্রস্তা দেববৎ পতিমানুকূল্যেনবর্ততে । বাৎস্যায়ন ।।১।।
তন্মেতেন কুটুম্বচিন্তামাত্মনি সংনিবেশয়েৎ ।।২।।
বেশ্ম চ শুচি সুসংমৃষ্টস্থানং
বিরচিতবিবিধকুসমং সংস্কৃতভূমিতলং
হৃদ্যদর্শনং স্ত্রিয়বর্ণাচরিতবলিকর্ম
পূজিত দেবায়তনং কুর্যাৎ, ।। ৩ ।।
পশ্চাৎ সংবেশনং পূর্বমুত্থানম্
অনববোধনংচ সুপ্তস্য ।। ১৭ ।।
স্বস্য চ সারস্য পরেভ্যো।
হনাখ্যানং ভর্তুমন্ত্রিতস্য চ ।। ৩০ ।।
নায়কমিত্রাণাং চ স্রগনুলেপতাম্বুলদানৈঃ পূজনং স্যাদতঃ । ।। ৩৬ ১ ।।

Everyday for twelve years standing on the well step
I have eagerly waited longing,
longing for your letter.
And truly after twelve years
the letter of my husband came
but there was none to read it to me.

What a tragedy !

Then there are songs where we get another picture. This song is self explanatory. It is sung by a woman addressing another whose husband is away from her.

The woman has tightened the border of garment
round her waist and plucks lentil
Oh, maiden, the crows are eating your stale rice
removing the cover of the straw hat.

The woman then answers :

Oh, sister, I shall not eat the stale rice,
Let the crows consume them.
My husband is away from home,
I pass sleepless nights ; let the crows eat the stale rice.

The first woman sings again :

Oh maiden, if you do not eat the stale rice
You will suffer from hunger.
Your husband is away now
Should you go and give a visit to your secret lover.

The above cannot incite the woman who has no secret lover. She says :

পরিজনে দাক্ষিণ্যম ॥ ৪০ ॥
জ্ঞাতিকুলস্থানভিগমনমন্তত্র ব্যসনোৎসবাভ্যাম ॥ ৪৮ ॥

অর্থাৎ ভার্যা একচারিণী ও গভীর বিশ্বাসবতী হইবেন, পতিকে দেববৎ মান্য করিয়া তাঁহার অনুকূলভাবে অবস্থান করিবেন। তিনি পতির মতানুসারে পরিবারের চিন্তা নিজে গ্রহণ করিবেন, গৃহকে উত্তমরূপে সম্মার্জন করিয়া পবিত্র রাখিবেন, তাঁহার গৃহখানি যেন দেখিতে মনোরম হয়, ত্রি-সন্ধ্যায় তাহাতে যেন সর্বজীবের উদ্দেশ্যে ভোজ্যবস্তু প্রদত্ত হয়, এবং, দেবালয়ে যেন পূজাবিধি সম্পাদিত হয়। স্বামী শয়ন করিবার পর তিনি শয়ন করিবেন, কিন্তু স্বামীর উঠিবার পূর্বেই উঠিয়া পড়িবেন। স্বামী সুপ্ত হইয়া থাকিলে তাঁহাকে জাগাইবেন না, তিনি নিজের ধন এবং স্বামীর সহিত যে পরামর্শ তাহা অপর ব্যক্তির নিকট বলিবেন না। তিনি ন্যায় অনুসারে স্বামীর বন্ধুবর্গকে মাল্যচন্দনাদি অনুলেপন ও তাম্বুল প্রদান করিয়া সৎকার করিবেন এবং বিপদ ও উৎসবের সময় ভিন্ন জ্ঞাতিগৃহে গমন করিবেন না। (শ্রীবিধুশেখর ভট্টাচার্য। ত দেব)

I will not eat the stale rice
let the crows eat them.
My suckling child is suffering from fever
he is tossing about in severe pain
Let the crows eat the stale rice.

These are nothing but frank expressions of the commonfolk. In a classless society such songs bear the idea of a community while in a class society it sides with the depressed and struggling masses. Thus we see that a girl whose husband is away is feeling herself in the confinement. She is all alone. Nature opens out into light and colour, but this is nothing to her without her husband. The following song describes another idea,

In Malava grows the *henna*
It has dyed Gujarat entirely,
The *henna's* colour comes up.

My younger devar is dear to me,
He brings the *henna* plant for me,
The *henna's* colour comes up.

He pressed the leaves and made a paste and filled a cup,
Bhabi, dye your hands with *henna*,
The *henna's* colour comes up.

What shall I do by dyeing my hands, *devar*,
One who would see the *henna*-dyed hands has gone,
The *henna's* colour comes up.

One lakh of rupees in cash shall I give,
If someone will go across the river,
The *henna's* colour comes up.

Write to my lord this much,
Your mother has passed away, come home,
The *henna's* colour comes up.[50]

Often, a newly wedded girl is inexperienced in the ways of married life. In her modesty, she makes a frank adminission of it. The following is an instance in point :

The bullock wears a bell, the buffalo a clapper
Do not be angry, I am still a raw girl.

Here is a song from Kannada that presents a picture of poverty-stricken family. Yet the girl is grateful for life to her mother for nourishing it. She sings,

50. Barua, Hem op. cit.

Born of a poor woman, I never saw the *arati* lamp
Never could I put on a silken *sari*
Woven with gold thread, mother;
Yet, how much I owe to you for the milk I suckled.

The setting of poverty is evident in the song given below. It is not unusual for a husband, poor as he is, not to be able to buy a *sari* of one rupee for his wife even once in a year,

Buy me a cloth to wear
Worth one rupee at least
It was that you should care for me
that I made you my yoke-fellow.

Poverty and exploitation drive the peasant away from his homeland, the husband of a peasant wife of Uttar Pradesh wants to migrate to the city in search of a job and food. But his wife does not want him to do so. She wants him to live the ancestral life of his village. So she sings,

I fall at your feet, darling,
do not go to the town;
eat the wheat-bread
with the cooked mustard leaves,
pass your days in the village.[51]

Here is another lament song by which we get a picture of a newly wedded girl who has no parents. It is the maternal uncle who is her gurdian on the paternal side. The girl is far away from the maternal uncle owing to her marriage. She is away for long. She does not get any news of theirs. She wishes to come to him. She sings seeing a person known to her who resides in the same place where her maternal uncle lives,

Who is going through the river
plying a red paddler
plying a blue paddler.
Please tell my maternal uncle to take me as
I feel like going to him.

Maternal uncle replies:

Oh my dear niece, wait till the month of Ashar
bearing all tyranny and fisticuff

51. ibid.

I will come with a pankhi boat
and will fetch you.[52]

Here is an example where a lady-love makes other people jealous by winning the whole love of her husband to herself :

"My mother-in-law looks not at me, and when she looks there is a frown and crooked glance on her face ; my husband's sister speaks cruel and piercing words ever and anon ; what shall I say of others ?— their conduct makes me tremble. O dear friend, all my fault is that my beloved looks at me with affection in his eyes."

Very pretty is the picture of the newly married maiden, who is distracted between love and embarrassment :

"If she sleeps, she cannot gaze at the face of her beloved ; if she does not sleep, her beloved would embarrass her by taking her by the hand. Distracted by such thoughts, the fair lady can neither sleep nor keep awake."

The sorrow of the parted lover is too hard to bear ;

"The mango-shoots here smoke with swarms of bees ; Here the Asoka glow with bursting buds of flower. Here the branches of the Kimsuka are coal-coloured with their dark shoots ; alas, where can I rest my weary eyes ? Everywhere fate is cruel to me."

And here is another picture where we find misunderstanding between the mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law. After the marriage of her son who is the only earning member of the family, mother-in-law is subordinate to her daughter-in-law. She says it is my daughter-in-law who is having all happiness. Thus she laments, "Due to the death of my dear husband it is my daughter-in-law who has become the housewife and is enjoying her life and having all the happines of the world. Exactly the same fortune I had with me. But that has been snatched away abruptly from me by the God of misery, etc. This attitude of the mother-in-law has annoyed the daughter-in-law so much so that she does not mind to express the following at the death of her mother-in-law,

Sasuri malo sakale
kheye deye jadi bela thake
to kanbo ami bikale[53]

52. ভাগ্নী— মেগ্‌না গাংগ (-অ) দিয়া
লাল 'চৈর' বাইয়া, নীল 'চৈর' বাইয়া
আমার মামুরে কইও গিয়া—নাইওর নিত আইয়া।
মামা— থাক থাক বাগনী গো কিলমুর খাইয়া
আষাঢ় মাস (-অ) নিমু নাইওরে পানসি নাও বাইয়া।
—(সিলেটী ভাষাতত্ত্বের ভূমিকা, শিবরতন লাহিড়ী ঢাকা, ১৩৬৮)

53. শাশুড়ী ম'ল সকালে, খেয়ে দেয়ে যদি বেলা থাকে তো কাঁদবো আমি বিকালে।
—(বাংলার লোকসাহিত্য, ২য় খণ্ড,—আশুতোষ ভট্টাচার্য)

This means, the mother-in-law expired in the morning, if I find time afternoon finishing lunch I will weep for her then.

The following song describes the position of widowed-sister who had lost her beloved and becoming totally ruined came to her brother for a shelter. The brother refused to offer any shelter to her. She wanted a small corner of any room of her brother's house where she may stay for the rest of life. But the brother did not agree to her proposal. He said that each and every corner of his house were fully occupied by others, so how were it possible for him to entertain her requests. She was refused even a corner of the house when her neighbours were offering palacial room to her for staying. If she accepted the offer she would earn bad repuation and they would call her a loose charactered woman. Everybody would look down upon her. So she is facing an unbearable situation, got annoyed to her brother's wife since she thought it is she who has influenced her brother for which a sister is suffering in that way. Thus a painful picture is drawn in the following song,

Due to the death of my parents,
due to the death of my husband
there is no place of a sister
in her brother's house, oh God.
Oh brother, please allot me a
corner of your house for my stay for the night.
There is no room even where an woven can be placed
there is no place where you can stay.

Oh god, after the death of my parents,
after the death of my husband, a sister has no
place at her parent's house.

Looking at my misfortune my good neighbours offer
better shelters for me
I have no alternative but to accept
that and to go to the neighbours.[54]

again the mother-in-law laments with the following words :

মাঃ— কত পোয়া পুরইলা গো, পুইয়া করলা ছাই,
কার কাছে করবাম নালিশ জাগা তো আর নাই।
সুখ কর গো পুতের বউ সুখ তোমারে দিছে,
এই সুখ আছিল আমার ডাকাইতে লইয়া গেছে।
এই কপালে আছিল আমার দুধ ভরা থাল,
এই কপালে আছিল আমার ঠোকরে ভাঙতো গাল। (লোক সাহিত্য, ঢাকা)

54. বোন :—মায়াবাবা মরণে শিরের সিন্দুর বিবনে,
ভাইয়ের বাড়িত বইনের ঠাঁই নাই।

Here is another picture in which it is known that a sister disobeys her mother-in-law's order for her brother. The newly wedded lady is staying away from her parent's home. After sometime her brother came to see her. Looking the brother in her husband's home her joy knows no bound. The mother-in-law asks the daughter-in-law to prepare food from coarse rice etc. for her brother but in this instance she refuses to obey her mother-in-law. She says,

I shall serve my brother with fine rice
My sister-in-law will eat the coarse one.
My brother will repose on a sofa couch
And his wife would lie on a mattress of straw.

Then there is another picture which we know from a popular saying,

narir satata ghorar takkar
nadir gati bojha dastur[55]

Which means, the hypocrisy of the women, the push of the horse and the movement of the river are very difficult to determine. Obviously, it is said aiming at an unchaste lady.

Here is another saying about the widow : *Rarimagir atharo that.*[56] It indicates that a widow serves eighteen men. It means a widow needs to satisfy everybody for her livelihood.

চুলাপাড় দেও গো ঠাঁই, আইজের নিশি পোহাইয়া যাই
পাইলা থুইব ঠাঁই নাই, চুলাপাড় জায়গা নাই।
বুঝাই গো, পড়শী বাড়িত জায়গার সীমা নাই।

মায়াবাবা মরণে শিরের সিন্দুর বিবনে
ভাইয়ের বাড়িত বইনের ঠাঁই নাই।
উগার (মাচার) তলে দেও গো জায়গা
আইজের নিশি (থাইক্যা) যাই।
মুরগী থইব কোন ঠাঁই, উগার তলে জায়গা নাই।
(লোকসাহিত্য, ঢাকা, ৪র্থ খণ্ড)

55. নারীর সততা, ঘোড়ার টক্কর, নদীর গতি, বোঝা দস্তুর।
নারীর বল, চোখের জল, (বাংলা প্রবাদ)।

56. রাঁড়ী মাগীর আঠার ঠাঁট।
রাঁড় যাঁটিয়ে চড় খাওয়া।
রাঁড়ী হয়ে ভোগ বালাই,
সবার আগে তারে সামলাই। (ঐ)

Chharas and proverbs:

Below is a Bengali *chhara* which speaks of polygamy.

One lady is cooking and serving
Another takes her meal,
The third goes to parents' house
without taking her food.[57]

It suggests that among the three wives of a person the first and the second wives are friendly to each other at least for that moments, while the third wife is sentimental. Being embarrassed she has left her husband's place for parent's house. It will happen once again when the first and third will be friendly and the second be annoyed. In this way, in the next turn, the second and the third may be a party when the first will remain all alone. Or, it may so happen that all the three will be friendly for the time being or will be engaged in quarrelling with each other, and may not be in speaking terms too. Next day they may be seen again loving each other and in joking mood. This is a continuous process.

In another Bengali *chhara* the position and status of a mother is depicted. It is said about the mother that,

(1) The milk is sweet, sugar is sweet and cream is sweeter
But mother is sweetest of all.

(2) What do you say about maternal aunt?
What do you say about paternal aunt?
What do you say about Brindaban?
There has been flower in the barren tree
There is nothing parallel to mother.

(3) You may say about flattened and fried rice
You may say about fried rice
But nothing is as good as rice
you may say about paternal aunt
You may say about maternal aunt

57. বৃষ্টি পড়ে টাপুরটুপুর নদে এল বান
শিব ঠাকুরের বিয়ে হল তিন কন্যা দান
এক কন্যা রাঁধেন বাড়েন আর এক কন্যা খান
আরেক কন্যা না খেয়ে বাপের বাড়ী যান।

But there is nothing who is
equal to mother.[58]

Thus evey Indian regards the mother and the mother-land as greater than heaven *Janani Janmbhumicha swargadapi gariyashi,*[59] it is said again *matai jatir bhagya niyanta,*[60] it is mother who creates the future of the nation or the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world. It is, therefore, said *mayer cheye daradi taake bale dan,*[61] she who is more compassionate than the mother is but a witch. This is why mother's curse is feared as goddess's wrath. This we also know from the mother of Shivaji,(1627-1680) who founded the Maratha Kingdom. Shivaji's mother thunders,

Beware of a mother's curse
Its fire shall scorch thy kingdom wide.
Son, mediate thy purpose high
And fill thy soul with fire
The blood of Sanbhaji doth cry
His wrong is undressed.[62]

Thus it is said by Asvaghosa,

In the words of women there is honey :
In their heart there is deadly poison.

Repeating this half-verse, Bhartrihari suggests :

Hence doth one drink from those lips,
And strike at the heart with the first!

But in the hand of ungrateful son sometime a mother gets humilation. His devotion to mother is transferred to his wife being enchanted by her love and we will see later how a mother reacts under such a condition.

In ancient days when women were confined to the four walls of her domesticated house, she passed her times with her own womanish

58. দুগ্ধ মিঠা চিনি মিঠা, আর মিঠা ননী,
ভার চ ইতে অধিক মিঠা মাও বড় জননী।
কিসের মাসী কিসের পিসী কিসের বৃন্দাবন,
মরা গাছে ফুল ফুটিছে মা বড় ধন।
চিড়ে বল মুড়ি বল, ভাতের সমান নয়,
পিসী বল মাসী বল, মায়ের সমান নয়।
59. জননী জন্মভূমিশ্চ স্বর্গাদপি গরিয়সী,
60. মাতাই জাতির ভাগ্য নিয়ন্তা।
61. মায়ের চেয়ে দরদী তাকে বলে ডান,
মায়ের দয়া নেই, মাসীর দয়া।
62. SFQ, Florida, U. S. A.

ideas and desires. During that time there was no need for female education of the modern type. In course of time the field of activities of the womenfolk have widened. Thus it has become a part and parcel of her life to get herself educated in the same way as that of a male member of the society. Previously it was a matter of regret to use umbrella and to wear shoe for a woman. But that idea is no more in existence now. Now it is a shame for her not to be smartly dressed and to wear shoe and now most women are ashamed if they are not properly educated.

It does need no clarification that the folksong deals with some common emotion and motives of the folk-people. As such, it does not degenerate from its essential genus relative homogeneous and collective entity. It expressess the relation of individual with contemporary society. Here is a song that is sung by a peasant woman of Karnatak to praise her husband where we get a picture of individual reaction :

> None like my husband all around I behold
> like pearls are the teeth of my beloved
> joy pervades everywhere when I hear his voice.

Here the imagination of the folk poets seems to reach the sublime heights of beauty of times. Following is an excerpt from a description of a village belle :

> Oh daughter of the poor, your waist is fast growing slim
> whilst walking you are a tender plantain in sprout
> If you speak, it's singing of cuckoo."

What a delectable description of the daughter of the poor.

In different songs we find that a mother-in-law envies her daughter -in-law. This is a social conflict which has arisen from the struggle for power. The sisters-in-law join the mother and place fuel in the hearth (*agune gritahute*). And when this lady gets wed she too faces the same consequences in the place of her husband, so it is said *nanadero nanad ache*,[63] a sister-in-law has also her sister-in-law. The difference of opinion and attitude between the mother-in-law and her daughter-in-law sometimes leads the mother-in-law to speak about her

63. ননদেরও ননদ আছে।
ননদিনীর কথাগুলো নিমেগিমে মাখা।
ননদিনী রায়বাঘিনী, দাঁড়িয়ে আছে কাল সাপিনী।
ননদিনী রায়বাঘিনী পাড়ায় পাড়ায় কুচ্ছ গায়,
ননদিনী যদি মরে সুখের বাতাস বইবে গায়।

daugher-in-law. in unchaste words such as *kalir bau ghar bhangani,*[64] means, modern wife of Kaliyuga is the cause of breaking up home. She is against the Hindu joint-family, or *adure bau nangta haie nache,*[65] a pet wife does whatever she likes. In order to rule these housewives the folk medicine is *bau jabda kile,*[66] the wife talks by fist. Thus from all that has been said so long about the womenfolk, it is very difficult to ascertain a real position of a woman from folklore. They have different roles, different ways of lives. Then it is said, *nari chhalanamayee,*[67] woman is fraudulent. There is anoher saying by which we know that *hindur dari, musalmaner nari, ganger kule bari, bane chare gaie a chare biswas nai,*[68] the beard of a Hindu, the women of the Muslim community, a house near the bank of a river, a cow that grazes in the forests—these four are not to be believed.

Although it is said that : *akkele sakal bandi, jale bandi mach, strir kache purus bandi, chhale bandi gach,*[69] which means, everybody is a prisoner to common sense, a fish is captive in water, man is panegyrist to wife while a tree is confined to its bark. Even though it has been said that, women should be avoided in one's travel, *pathi nari bibarjita*[70] To avoid repitition we stop quoting *chharas,* proverbs etc. here because they will be available in large numbers in the appendices of this study. Readers are requested to look at those for having a more clear idea about the folklore of women of Bengal—their position, status and influence.

A critical look into various parts of the life of the Indian women through folklore clearly discloses the nature of their growth and development, particularly in the folk-society. The ancient women enjoyed higher status when it went to a distressing point in the middle of the 18th century to the early years of this century. During this time we were ruled by the British. We mention this for developing an idea.

We should remember here that till 1917 when the first modern organisation of women and Home Rule Movement started there was

64. কলির বউ ঘর ভাঙানী
65. আদুরে বউ ন্যাংটা হয়ে নাচে or, লাজে বউ চুরি, পাদে যেন তুবড়ী।
66. বউ জব্দ কিলে
67. নারী ছলনাময়ী
68. হিন্দুর দাড়ি, মুসলমানের নারী, গাঙ্গের কুলে বাড়ী
বনে চড়ে গাই, এ চারে বিশ্বাস নাই।
69. আক্কেলে সকল বন্দী, জলে বন্দী মাছ,
স্ত্রীর কাছে পুরুষ বন্দী, ছালে বন্দী গাছ।
70. পথি নারী বিবর্জিতা,
সং—আমথং চালয়েদ্বৃষ্টা পথি নারী বিবর্জিতা
জাগরণে ভয়ং নাস্তি অতি ক্রোধ নির্বাধতে।

deteriorating condition of Indian womenfolk. Indian rural society is marked by solidarities such as caste, kin and village. Religion underwrites each of these solidarities and also links up the village with wider solidarities. There is a view that the village solidarity depends on caste. When an inter-village fight occurs the leaders of the dominant castes get involved and the other, especially the member of the lowest castes, are dragged into it.

There are significant differences between various religious groups and castes in matter of marriage. The social institution of marriage ensures the children born of it a recognised and legally sanctioned position in society. When marriage is monogamous, the husband and wife become the nucleus of a domestic group. It is in a polyandrous or polygmaous marriage that the elementary family is a part of a wider domestic group. Often a group of married brothers and their wives and children are found to live under a single roof under the authority of the eldest brother. Or the domestic group consists of the man and his wife, his married sons and their children. In several parts of the country people live in lineage groups. The members of the lineage lived under the same roof, or in a group of neighbouring houses, held property together, and ate together and this we mentioned earlier.

Differentiation on the basis of sex resulted in intensifing social interaction among members of the same sex. A married girl works in kitchen with her mother-in-law and sees her husband only at night. Ideally, the children in joint-family are the children of all the male members of the parental generation and discrimination by a parent in favour of his own children is regarded as reprehensible. The relation between women member in a joint-family are frequently of conflict. The mother-in-law and daughter-in-law relationship is celebrated in folklore for the intensity of its conflicts. Relation between a woman and her husband's sister and between her husband's brother's wife are also conflict-ridden. The basic fact of rivalry between brothers and the conflict between women members of the family lead even to the splitting up of the joint-family. The relation between a man and his parents-in-law is a formal one and only gradually, with the lapse of time, does it become less formal.

While there is variation between different groups in the customs and beliefs regarding marriage and kinship, the institution of marriage is a contract which a man and a woman enter into by mutual agreement, but rituals are performed on the occasion of marriage.

Early marriage is still common in India though the marriage age has been going up stage by stage in the last few decades among the

urban and educated societies. The marriage age in different countries may be quoted under in a table for point of information :

Average Marriage age in different countries

Country	*Female*	*Male*
Egypt (1948)	19.4	25.2
Canada (1951)	21.1	24.2
U. S. A. (1950)	20.4	23.2
India (1951)	14.5	20.0
Japan (1950)	23.1	25.8
U. K. (1951)	21.9	25.2
W. Germany (1946)	24.7	27.4
France (1946)	22.6	26.0

Sources (S. N. Agarwala 'The age of marriage in India', Population Index Vol. 23, 1957).

The next table shows age of marriage of different communities :

Age at marriage of religious groups in India 1891-1901·
1891-1931

Religious groups	*Female*	*Male*
Hindus	12.5	19.7
Jain	13.1	20.5
Buddhists	13.2	21.1
Muslim	14.2	22.0
Sikhs	15.0	22.5
Christians	17.1	23.9

We should remember the fact that by about 300 B.C. marriage came to be regarded as obligations for girls. For her there is no offspring except by intercourse with a man and no lineage proceeds from her. But for a man without a wife, when he shall recite the Avesta as it is mentioned in Vendidad, there may be a lineage which proceeds onwards to the future existence (Pahlvi texts, part 1).

Here public opinion is much less sympathetic to a woman who has gone astray even unwillingly, than to a man who leads a vicious life deliberately. The following sayings provide some pictures about the womenfolk of the country. Aiming a unchaste lady it is said that *bhatar thakte udmo rari*,[71] a rampant widow with her husband living or *sat bhatari savitri*,[72] a Savitri having seven husbands.

From about the beginning of the Christian era society began to insist upon abosolute virginity in the case of brides. Virgins, who had the misfortune of being criminally assaulted, had therefore hardly any

71. ভাতায় থাকতে উদ্‌মো রাঁড়ী। And রামাভামা মিষ্টি বড়, ভাতার লড় টক।

72. সাত ভাতারী সাবিত্রী। Again রার ভাতারের দাম বার আনা, তার মাগের দেখ বিবিয়ানা।

chance of an honourable marriage with any other person. To justify this it has been said that *ati bara gharani na pai ghar, ati bara sundari na pai bar,*[73] an ultra-good housekeeper does not find a household : an excessively beautiful girl does not find a husband. We remember another saying—*jar sange ghar karini se bara gharani, jar hate bhat khaini se bara radhuni,*[74] she is indeed a beautiful housewife with whom I have never lived, she must be a decent cook who has never served the dish prepared by herself. So the folk advice is, *gai kinbe jhapri, bau anbe fentri,*[75] buy a sleek cow ; bring home a plain looking daughter-in-law. But the bride-price or dowry system stand on the way. Needless to mention that the price by the bridegroom for a bride was originally meant for a compensation to the bride's father for the loss of her service. A portion of it soon began to be returned to the bride as a marriage gift. The bride price was usually paid in cash or kind. In Vedic custom the bride purchase was known, but not held in esteem ; the son-in-law in such cases was described as *vijamata* or a disrespectable son-in-law. In the epic we find that at the time of the marriage of Kaikeyi, Gandhari and Madri a heavy bride-price were paid to their gurdians.

The prevalence of child marriage since the beginning of the Christian era has furthered helped its growth. The bride-price has become common in the lower section of society. Historically speaking, a great advance over the practice freely permitted the father to sell his daughter. In this way women have lost more of their power and status, they have become dependent upon men. Its consequence has resulted in the stunting of women's personality. But "it is noteworthy that India has not experienced a feminist movement ;..... it is when a world view goes counter to the claims of women and men uphold that world view as against the spirit of the times, that a feminist movement takes place. This is the experience of modern western history. But in India men came forward to uphold the claims of women and move with the times ; and in this they were sustained as much by old Indian spiritual thought as contained following the Vedanta....The aspirations of modern Indian women have to be viewed against this background."

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73. অতি বড় ঘরণী না পায় ঘর, অতি বড় সুন্দরী না পায় বর।
74. যার সঙ্গে ঘর করি নি সে বড় ঘরণী, যার হাতে ভাত খাইনি সে বড় রাধুনী।
75. গাই কিনবি ঝাপড়ি বউ আনবি ফেতরী
ঘর বাঁধো খাটো, গরু কেনো ছোট,
বিয়ে করো ভালো, তাই গেরস্থের ভাল।

Bride-price tended to dwarf the personality of our women. It tended to exaggerate the husband's personality as well. Let us quote a folk-sayings of Bengal in which we know *kaner ma kande aar takar putli bandhe,*[76] bride's mother weeps but ties the purse securely. A fatherless girl apprehending her marriage to an uncertain person against money thus sing :

Marry me not to an old man, uncle,
Marry me not, uncle ;
with fresh tresses, I shall become a widow,

Marry me not to a servant, uncle,
Marry me not, uncle ;
As he receives the call, he will run away.

Marry me not to a sick person, uncle,
Marry me not, uncle ;
with fresh tresses, I shall become a widow,[77] etc. etc.

Along with this problem of bride-price which is still prevalent in the lower classes we should also consider dowry system. This is in vogue in the middle and upper middle class families in general and this

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76. কনের মা কান্দে আর টাকার পুটুলী বাঁধে।

এত টাকা নিলে বাবা ছাঁদনাতলায় বসে,
এখন কেন কাঁদ বাবা গামছা মুড়ি দিয়ে।
আম ফলে থোলো থোলো তেঁতুল ফলে বাঁকা.

ছাওয়াল সুদ্ধাই বিয়া করে মায়ের ঝোলায় টাকা।
আমরা যাবো পরের ঘরে পরের অধীন হয়ে,
পরের বেটী মুখ করবে মুখনাড়া দিয়ে,
দুই চক্ষের জল পড়বে বসুধারা দিয়ে। (রবীন্দ্রসংগ্রহ)

অবলার মা কাঁদে গো অবলারে লইয়া,
এত সাধের অবলারে ক্যামনে দিবাম বিয়া,
আগে যদি জানতাম আমি যাইবে কোল দিয়া
তবে তো না পালতাম আমি বুকের দুধ দিয়া। (লোকসাহিত্য ছড়া, সিরাজদ্দীন কাশিমপুরী)

It is pathetic for that moment. After sometime everything become all right when the wife requests her husbands not to left her alone. She wants to be a party of her husband's voyage. But the son of the merchant being unable to comply with her requests says,

তোমার তরে আনিব শাঁখা, গজ মুক্তার আনিব রে মালা ;
বিদায় দাও আমারে কন্যা, বাণিজ্যেতে যাই এই বেলা।

তখন কাঞ্চন মালা উত্তর দেয় :

তুমি মুক্তার মালা আমার, তুমি আমার শাঁখা,
আমি দাসীরে নিয়া চল সাথে।
আমি সিদুর বেচিয়া বেড়াব বাড়ী বাড়ী
তোমার পসরা নিয়া মাথে।

Both these separations are heart-breaking but they are reality.

77. ibid.

evil is very deeprooted. Nodoubt, dowry system was generally unknown in the early societies. It is connected with the conception of marriage as a *dana* or gift. A religious gift in kind is usually accompanied by a gift in cash or gold. It is only mediaevel times and in Rajputana that we find the dowry-system assuming alarming proportions. Because of dowry often it is difficult to find grooms for girls. And in consequence, they are forced to fade into 'definite unmarriageableness' to use Aldous Huxley's words. Thus a girl withers away. The following song is a sad undertone : "In the prime of youth, my marriage did not take place, O my cruel fate".

It is during the last days of the nineteenth century that the amount of the dowry had begun to assume scandalous proportions. A good education, a lucrative appointment of a good footing in a learned profession improved enormously the social and economic position of a youth, and made him immensely attractive as a son-in-law. He naturally fetched a high price in the marriage market. There were no such factors in the pre-British period, when society was mostly agricultural and government appointments were not so as they are at present. So naturally anything like the present scandalous dowry system did not exist in the Hindu or even in the Muslim period. The bad effect of the dowry system can be gleaned from a folksong which runs thus,

I sold my cow and paid the forest tax
I sold my bullock and paid the land revenue
This is not enough ;
My mind is disturbed, my love
I have nothing to offer now ;
From where I can pay the dowry.
For the marriage of my daughter.

In another folksong a girl is complaining to mother as to why she did not kill her just after birth. Had she been killed then her parents might not had to face the troubles for giving her in marriage to a suitable groom. The following is another heart-breaking song where a girl is asking her father not to purchase a groom for her who is after heavy dowry. The wordings of the song are :

Pita— *Ma tor bihar lagya paryachi daye*
oman sikhate dhik, andha adhik beche jeno salik tiye

Father— Oh my daughter, I am facing a difficult situation
Fie on such education which encourages to sale a son like a parakeet blindly.

Kanya— *sonar chain, sonar ghari, garba jader galaypari*

amon pasu kino na baba diya takakari
biha ki padartha, apadartha bojhe na chhela peye

Daughter—Those who are proud of golden chain and golden watch let them hang by a rope
Do not purchase such a brute one spending so much
Since the worthless man has a marriageable son
he cannot understand the actual meaning of a marriage.

Pita— *Meyer bap dumba mesh, e pora bongla desh*
nityi khachchhe mangsha kete
niya dichchhe klesh,[78]

Father— The father of the bride is nothing but a thick-tailed sheep in this unfortunate land of Bengal,
Taking home a daughter-in-law she gets tortured daily.

But the marriage took place either with the desired groom paying demanded dowry or to another where the parents or the gurdians spend as much money as possible for them. Here comes the relation of married life. The normal relations between the husband and the wife were determined by the principle that there would be an absolute identity in their aesthetic, material and moral interests. The principal was recognised in the Vedic age, and is approved by later Dharmasastra writers.

The principle of absolute identity of the interests of the couple followed as a natural corollary from the recognition of the fact that the husband and the wife are the complements of each other. Wife is the keystone of the arch of husband's happiness. The house may be full of sons, daughters, grandsons and granddaughters etc. but it is quite empty if his wife is not there to supervise over it.

The husband treats his wife as the dearest friend. The wife prefers to be the queen of a limited household.[79] She is socially significant. She is the spirit of love. It is she who makes the home peaceful. If

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78. পিতা—মা তর বিহার লাগ্যা পইর‍্যাছি দায়ে
অমন শিক্ষাতে ধিক, অল্প অধিক বেচে যেন শালিক টিয়ে
কন্যা—সোনার চেন সোনার ঘড়ি, গর্ব যাদের গলায় পড়ি,
অমন পশু কিনো না বাবা দিয়া টাকাকড়ি।
বিহা কি পদার্থ অপদার্থ বোঝে না ছেলে পেয়ে।
পিতা—মেয়ের বাপ হুদ্বা মেষ এ পোড়া বাংলাদেশ
নিত্যি খাচ্ছে মাংস কেটে নিয়া দিচ্ছে ক্লেশ
(গম্ভীরা—লোকসঙ্গীত ও উৎসব একাল ও সেকাল, প্রফুল্লকুমার ঘোষ, কলিকাতা, ১৯৬৮)

79 **So she prefers—একলা ঘরে গিন্নী হবো, চাবিকাঠি ঝুলিয়ে নাইতে যাব, which means, I shall be the sole misterss of the house and I would hang the bunch of keys at my side and go to take my bath.**

she has peace of mind she guides her family cheerfully. She has found peace in her heart, she has the essence of all beauty, so she can make the home peaceful and beautiful. From this peaceful domestic life she wants to be a mother. As soon as she attains that position she is respected and regarded by all. Her status is the most significant criterion of progress of any society or culture. Motherhood is a spiritual transformation of wifehood. "Within the limited circle of her motherhood, she is the example of self-transcendence through self-enforcement....that enables women even as a wife to function effectively as a citizen, embracing with her mother-heart the millions of its body politic." The child bearing capacity of the women is a thing which is admired by the society. A woman, incapable of it, is socially looked down upon. So she sings,

> Better be mud than a barren woman
> On the mud will grow a tree
> Giving shelter from the sun.

This has found an adequate expression in folksongs.

Every girl has the picture of a man in her dreams. When she is blessed with such a man, her joy knows no bounds. Any absence, however brief, destroys her bit by bit. Of course, as a wife she has certain duties and obligations. "For the first time after several centuries, marriage is becoming a comradeship of equals, a joint adventure in the enrichment of society and enjoyment of its delights. Under the old joint-family, woman as wife hardly got the chance to express herself. The impact of modern world forces has all but broken down that joint family..". And then when a housewife of a folk family has neither the mother-in-law nor the sisters-in-law she says *sasuri nai, nanad nai kare kari dar, age khai pantabhat, sese lepi ghar*,[80] I have neither mother-in-law, nor sister-in-law, whom should I care for; I will take stale rice first and then I will plaster the house with cow-dung and water.

Even though there may be co-wife which cause rivalry and conflicts among the wives. In the traditional Hindu society the husband had the privilege of superseding his wife or taking a second wife. The wife's misfortune was all the greater because she was economically dependent on her husband, but the law did not permit divorce.

Modern scientific thought has clearly shown that there is nothing inherent in the fact of sex which denies woman any priviliege.

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80. শাশুড়ী নেই ননদ নেই কারে করি ডর, আগে খাই পান্তাভাত, শেষে লেপি ঘর।

Inferiority of woman is socially imposed, and cannot be explained on rational or psychological grounds.

It is woman who sets the standard of living by deciding what food the family would eat, what clothes she will select for herself and for the members of her family, and how she will set up and run her home. She guides her family, trains her children, by gentle persuasion influences her husband. Experience has shown that women respond to changes quickly. To them, education does not mean just literacy; it also includes hygiene, childcare, domestic science, nutrition and cultural values. The traditional idea that woman's place is in the home is deep-rooted but it is falsely assumed that the woman engaged in profession or taking part in public life is a poor mother and wife. They have a very great adjustment power. But that does not mean a woman is ready to tolerate a co-wife. The modern woman is no longer prepared to accept a social code which recognizes a co-wife or the dominance of male as binding on her. She says *bhatar jamke dite pari tabu satinke dete parina,*[81] the husband can be suffered to die but not to be given over to the co-wife or *ashath kete basat kari, satin kete alta pari,*[82] let me cut down an Asvatha (the religious fig) tree and build my residence there; let me kill my co-wife and paint my feet with her gore.

Recent changes in social structure may be discussed under the following heads: (a) caste in modern India (b) changing rural and urban life and (c) changes in the position of women. In this study we have discussed more or less elaborately the last one as that is available in folklore. While doing so, we have also touched the other two in restricted manner for obvious reason.

It is a popular say that urbanization, industrialization and especially westernization have secured for Indian women an increased measure of freedom. This may be true for women of the upper class but not necessarily for the women of the poor class or folk women. For instance, women of lower class have the right, given to them by custom, to marry again if widowed. Divorce is permitted by custom, still then it is not universally appreciated and it is a falsehood to say that these rights came to Indian women owing to western influence. (*To be concluded in the next issue*)

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81. ভাতার বমকে দিতে পারি তবু সতীনকে দিতে পারি না। and পদ্মফুলে তোমরা ভোলে খোঁপায় তোলে বর। নাতনী লো তোর খোঁপা দেখে সতীন জ্বর জ্বর॥ 'সতীনে খোঁপা'-র এই থেকে উৎপত্তি।
82. অশথ কেটে বসত করি, সতীন কেটে আলতা পড়ি।

M. SURYANARAYANAN

A NOTE ON A FEW FOLK-TALES OF SAORAS

AN attempt is made in this article to analyse a few folk tales of Saoras. The present work is confined to the Saoras of Srikakulam District in Andhra Pradesh.

1. KINA REMANGNA KATHA (Tiger and Cat Tale)

LONG ago, a tiger made friendship with a cat. One day the tiger killed a pig and asked the cat to bring fire from the village near by, to fry the pig. The cat went to the village and filled her stomach by stealing away the food stored by the families in the village and forgot about her work and finally slept in the village. The tiger waited and waited thinking that something might have happened to the cat. It became dark. Ants who came to eat the flesh observed the tiger and after having come to know about the position, advised the tiger, "You give up the idea of eating the animal after roasting. Keep the catch in a bush for two or three days and eat, it tastes good. Nobody will come to share with you if you keep like this." The tiger was very much pleased with these words and also informed the same to the other tigers. The ant also told the male tigers to eat the catch from the anus side and the female tigers to eat the catch from the mouth side. Hence, whenever we see a dead and half-eaten animal we can distinguish from it whether it was killed by a male or a female tiger.

2. UDA GUR NA KATHA (Mango Fruit Tale)

There used to live in a Saora village a Saora couple. The other people used to bring good mangoes from the forest but these people being lazy were not used to go for mangoes. At last the wife felt the need for mangoes and asked her husband to bring mangoes as there was nothing to cook in the house that day. He went alone to the forest to a sweet mango tree. While he was collecting mangoes a tiger and a bear came to the tree from opposite directions to eat the mangoes. He immediately got up the tree. The bear also got up the tree and was reaching the same branch where he was hiding. He cleverly holding

another branch, with his hands, kicked the approaching bear suddenly. She fell down on the tiger on the ground. They started fighting and finally went away from the place. Later many persons from his village came there to gather the fruits. He then got down from the tree and explained to them what had happened. They told him never to go to the forest unequipped and alone, especially to a sweet mango tree as bears are more fond of them.

3. BANGSALE DIMAMNABA (Sleep Properly)

To watch their Podu fields, four Saoras went and slept there at a watching house. One of them began snoring while he was sleeping. Hearing the sound, a tiger came and approached the person; when he was snoring, it used to reach him, and when he stopped it used to go away. It used to come daily. One of the other persons observed it and on one day he prepared a trap and tied one end of the rope of the trap to his foot and slept. The tiger, as usual, came and fell in the trap. In the process of escaping from the trap, it rolled this side and that side and the person who tied one end of the trap rope to his foot began rolling accordingly. Ultimately they both rolled from the hill into the valley. Both the tiger and the person died. Hence, while sleeping, if anybody was snoring, the others would say "BANGSALE DIMAMNABA" (sleep properly) and if the person sleeps by turning towards other direction, he will stop snoring according to their belief.

4. BAGU BADI MARANGI NA KATHA (A tale of two friends)

There lived two close friends in a Saora village. Wherever they went, whenever they worked, whenever they ate—everything they used to do jointly and together. Suddenly one of them died. The other person could not recover from the shock soon. He always used to think of his friend. One day, while he was passing through the burial ground to tend his cattle, where his friend was cremated, he suddenly heard the voice of his friend calling him by the name. He appeared before him in the form of a ghost. They spoke together. While separating, his dead friend told him not to see his back side. But this person purposefully saw him thinking that he was hiding something and reached his village. Soon after he reached home, he got a severe fever. His parents asked him the reason. He narrated what had happened. They brought a Kudanmar (Shaman). The Kudanmar with his spiritual power discovered the face of the ghost with a pot. So it could not see. By seeing this all the other ghosts frightened and they never used to come in a physical form since then.

5. KULLOJAN NA KATHA (Tales of Jackal)

A. In one village Saoras sacrified a cow to a god and sold the skin to a Pidi. He took the skin to his house but the next morning he could not find the skin. A jackal came and ate away the skin. The Saoras asked the Pidi to give their money for the skin. He told them that the skin was eaten away by some animal and after finding out the fact he said that he would pay them. He asked the Labobojan (the goddess of earth) about the skin. The Labobojan told that a jackal had eaten it and told him where she was. He went there and the jakal started running fast. He saw her near a redgram field. There were a few persons working. He shouted at them to hold the jackal. She entered the field. The persons could catch hold of her somhow. During the process of hurriedly coming out from the field a branch of the red-gram plant struck at her one eye and she had become blind. The Pidi came there and asked the jackal about the skin. The jackal very cleverly asked him whether his skin was eaten away by a good jackal or a blind jackal. He replied that it was eaten by a good jackal. Then she replied that it was not herself, as she was blind of one eye. So the Pidi left her.

B. One person had given his bullock on lease to another person After the expiry of the period the owner of the bullock went to the other person's house to whom he had given his bullock on lease. He returned his bullock. The owner of the bullock asked him as to what happened to its calf. The other person replied in surprise that how could a bullock give birth to a calf. A dispute arose between them on that matter. A jackel was passing through by that time. They told her what had happened and sought her verdict. The jackal told them that she could give her verict, provided they gave her a few eggs to eat. So they gave her a few eggs. She ate all of them and told them to make all the villagers assemble at the Gamong's (Head-man's) house. As required, all persons assembled there. She went there and told all persons that she had seen the sea burning while she was coming from that side. All the people assembled there laughed and expressed their doubts whether it could be possible. Then she cleverly told them that if a bullock was capable of reproducing, then it would also be possible for the sea to burn. They understood the logic and ultimately over-ruled the person's claim for a calf and taught him alesson.

C. Once a jackal went to a stream. A crocodile caught hold of her leg. The jackal told that she caught a root instead of her leg. The

crocodile left the leg thinking that it was a root. So the jackal escaped. The crocodile observed the jackal coming daily to eat Kurgat fruits (Schizizum jambolanam fruits). She crawled to the tree and covered herself with leaves. As usual the jackal came to eat the fruits. The crocodile caught her leg. The jackal thought that it was nothing but crocodile and cleverly spoke out "O Kurgat, O Kurgat" and added saying to herself "what surely the Kurgat used to reply, to day it is not replying". The crocodile heard these words and replied "Yes, Yes". In that process she left the leg of the jackal and it escaped. The crocodile was disappointed very much and firmly determined to take revenge against the jackal. So she searched and found the jackal's house. When the jackal was out of the house she entered the house to catch hold of jackal as soon as it entered. After sometime the jackal while entering her house found the foot prints of the crocodile. She very calmly went to a nearby cattle keepers who were tending cattle, to help her to kill the crocodile. The jackal told them to kill the crocodile and fry it on fire and told that she would look after the cattle. She drove the cattle to the Ragi fields and by the time the crocodile was fried and made ready to eat, then she cried that the cattle were eating away the Ragi fields. Those people, at once left the fried crocodile there and ran to drive the cattle from the field. The jackal came to the spot and ate as much meat of the crocodile as she could eat and ran away by the time they returned.

Discussion :

The first tale KINA REMANGA KATHA, the second one UDA GUR NA KATHA, and the third BANGSALE DIMAMNABA reaveal Saoras close association with forest and forest animals. Some of the tales have a moral value. Children can learn much from the tales which are useful in their future. The fourth tale BAGU BADI MARANGI NA KATHA though does not find any significant value, tells about their concept about ghost. The tiger and the cat making friendship is found among the plains stories but here in the first tale it was explained differently. Under fifth, THREE JACKAL TALES were narrated. The jackal was find here as a clever and cunning and is also seen depicted as clever and cunning among plains stories. In the first jackal tale (A) the jackal is depicted as a very clever animal. The second jackal tale (B) tells that greed is bad. In the third jackal story (C) we find crocodile which is very rare to find in Saora country. This clearly indicates that the idea of crocodile is foreign to them, which might have entered the Saora folk tales by culture contact.

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BOOK-REVIEW

DIALECT, PROVERBS, AND WORD-LORE, Editor, Gomme, George Laurence, Volume II of *The Gentleman's Mayazine Library*. London, Elliot Stock, 1886. x+352 pages. Reissued by Singing Tree Press, a division of Gale Research Company, Detroit, Michigan, 1968. L.C. ||68-23900. $ 12.00.

The book under review is volume no 2 of Singing Tree Press's 13 volume set of folklore series. Each volume is devoted to one subject and classified and presents the contributors to the *Gentleman's Magazine* (1731-1868). The pioneering English Dialect Society examined volume upon volume of *The Gentlemen's Magazine* when perparing its contribution on dialect to *A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles* and for good reason. The famous old journal was the repository of scores of original observations on provincial speech by intelligent travelers and as many analyses by scholars of word origins and the histories of proverbs.

As part of *The Gentleman's Magazine Library*, the volume's chief merit, in the view of its editor, was that it consisted in ". . .local knowledge and information which is so abundantly shown throughout its pages, and which is now so rapidly becoming impossible for the modern student to attain." The mass of selected and annotated material is divided into several sections, such as,

—Lists of local words and dialect specimens (Northumberland, Lancashire, Zetland, Exmoor, et al.) ;

—Proverbs (Anglo-Saxon, weather, local, Northern, seasons, etc.) ;

—Special words (archaic, compound, nominal. . .plus groups, such as words and expressions for drunkeness) ;

—Names of persons and places ;

—Signs of inns.

Besides reprints, certain editorial additions are incerted. A few signed by "Hinyboro" originally printed in 1818-19 have curtailed because the authors wandered off into dissertations, took up too much space for their real value. This is a well-come series for which Singing Tree Press deserves congratulation from everybody interested in the subject.

C. R. Sen

LAUKIK SAVDAKOSH by Sri Kamini Kumar Ray, with an Introduction by Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji. Indian Publications, 3, British Indian Street, Calcutta-1, Folklore Series No. 13, 1868 ; pp. 248 ; Rs. 12.50.

The book under review contains much useful information on Bengali culture, particularly folk-culture, presented in the form of a Dictionary in Bengali. The words have been alphabetically arranged

under seven categories, viz. house and home, domestic articles, agriculture, flora, fauna, rites and customs, and kinship terms and personal names. Some of these sections have been further divided into a number of sub-sections. For example, the words under the category of 'agriculture' have been classified under the following sub-sections: words denoting different types of agricultural personnel, words denoting agricultural implements, words denoting different kinds of soil and field, words denoting the entire process of cultivation (preparation of field, sowing, havesting, etc.). The lexical items have been neatly described. The synonyms of the words found in the different dialects of Bengali, and at times also homonyms, have been given in it as far as has been possible. The dialects in which the synonyms and homonyms occur have also been indicated. The culture-words that are more important have been copiously discussed with the help of sub-items related to the principal word (e.g. the different parts and varieties of an article, and so on). The data used in the book have been collected from published material and the author's field-notes. The book contains two Prefaces, one written by Dr. Sunity Kumar Chatterji, and the other by the author of the book. Both the Prefaces are replete with background informations.

This is in short the scheme of the work. In all likehood every reader of the book will be highly impressed with the sustained work of Mr. Ray, and also benefit by his researches. The multi-purpose approach of the author has made the book somewhat cumbersome, for he has tried to make the book a study of Bengali dialects, of Bengali folklore, material culture and many other things. It has become so perhaps for the reason that Mr. Ray devoted the best part of his mtaure academic pursuits to this study and acquired a large mass of material all of which he wished to compress within the short span of this book. But the major portion of the book has been devoted to the study of Bengali culture and folklore, and we have no doubt that this aspect of the book will evoke admiration from every reader, whether he is a specialist or not. The author has provided a stable and useful base for further research work.

Sudhibhushan Bhattacharya

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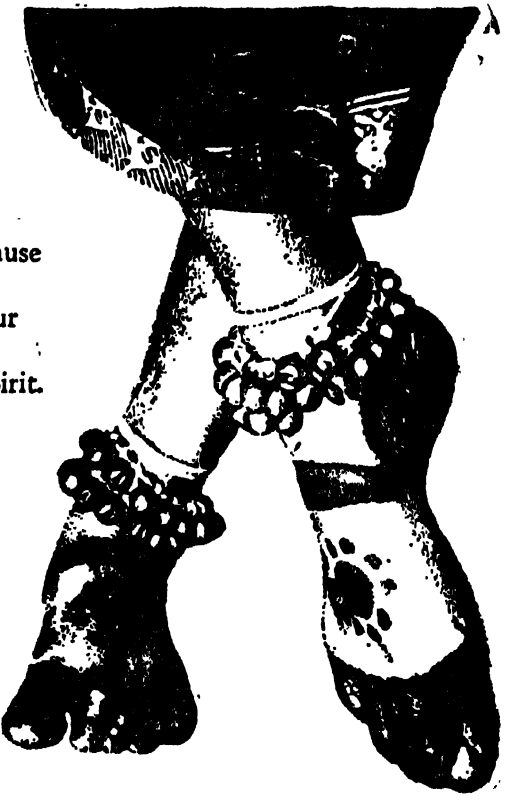
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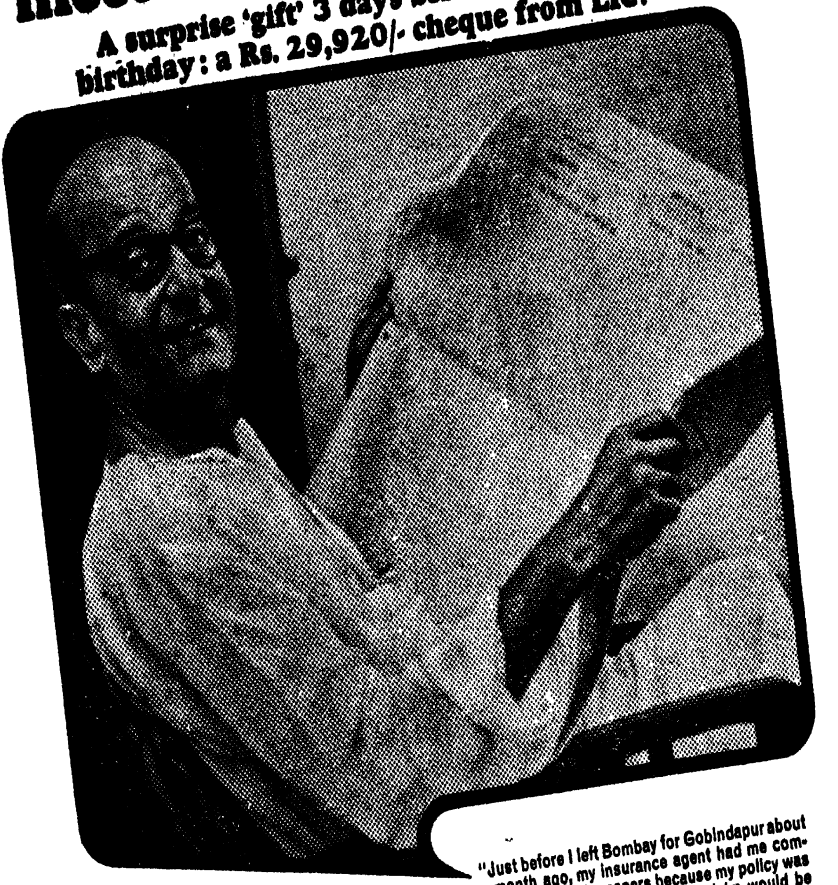
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SANKAR SEN GUPTA

WOMEN IN ANCIENT LITERATURE AND FOLKLORE

(Continued from previous issue)

Here is a pregnancy custom that is interesting to note. The husband of a wife pregnant for the first time should not look at an eclipse of the sun or the moon. If he violates this rule his child will be maimed in some way. Hare lip in particular is caused by the neglect of this precaution is believed by a number of Indian folk people even today. This is also in force among certain original people of Malayasia which we know from Tom Harrison.

Then there are charms to make delivery easy. On the sacred plain of Kurukshetra, near New Delhi where the great battle of the Mahabharata was fought, there stood a fort popularly known as Chaka-bu-ka Killa. The fort is no longer in existence, but its site is pointed out by the extraordinarily large bricks that are sometimes dug out at a little depth from the surface, and which are believed to have formed part of the fort. Popular belief imparts a very great efficacy to these bricks. In cases of difficult or protracted labour, a piece of one of these bricks is dipped in a small quantity of water, which is given to the patient to drink, and it has the effect of relieving the pain and making delivery easy. Sometimes, something like a labyrinth or a maze, is drawn on a dish (*thali*) which is first drawn by the patient and then washed with water, then it is given to the patient to drink. This water is also credited with the same efficacy as that in which a brick-piece has been dipped. This is observed by the Hindus.[35]

Below is a Muslim custom. Here the following couplet is written on an earthen plate and it is placed on the head of the lying-in-woman to facilitate delivery.

Likh kar chapri sir par dhari
Nikal para ya nikal pari[36]

35. ibid.

36. Kabiraj, Shibnarayan, "Hindu and Muslim Women in Folk Custom, Rites and Tradition" in "Women in Indian Folklore", Calcutta, 1969.

The woman then gives birth to a boy or a girl.

There are also charms that predict the sex of an expecting child. Following is an example :

Treble the letters of the woman's name; add to the number of the letters the name of the country in which the woman lies; divide the whole by 8; if the remainder is even, the baby will be a daughter; if odd, a son.*

*There are more such ideas which goes as *Khanar Vacan* in Bengal. The following is an example :

গ্রাম গর্ভিনী ফুলে যুতা। তিন দিয়ে হয় পুত।।
একে মৃত, দু'য়ে সুতা। শুন্য হলে গর্ভ মিথ্যা।।

It means that the words of the name of the village and the words of the pregnant woman together with the words of the name of a flower which the pregnant woman may utter during the counting hour are to be added together. The total will then be divided by number 3. If the remainder is 1, the expected child will be a son, if 2, a daughter and if O, abortion will take place.

It is interesting to note that scientifically, no doctor can guarantee the birth of a son or a daughter to order. But modern research gives hope that in due course it will become possible to choose the sex of one's baby. A Soviet Veterinary surgeon Victor Shulov has discovered a simple, effective method of determining, a sex ratio in animal births.

In biology both sexes are needed for procreation, and Nature keeps an equal balance between males and females. This law of parity manifests itself unfailingly among mammals, where the ratio of male and female in the overall population is approximately 1 : 1.

The chemical composition of the blood of a pregnant female undergoes substantial changes. Specifically, what are known as gonadotropins—the hormones affecting the sex glands, called gonads—multiply and function with increased intensity. The experiment showed that the gonadotropins of one biological species are capable of stimulating the activity of the internal secretion glands of another, even though remote biologically. Experience shows that the sex ratio in the litter of one species, while remaining on the whole close to 1 : 1, deviates from this standard in individual cases. The reasons for such deviations are many and include the parents' age and hereditary predisposition. To ascertain the scope and frequency of such deviations in natural conditions, Shulov conducted a thorough inspection of some 10,000 lambs which were the offspring of 6,000 sheep, all previously divided into age groups and subsequently fertilized by rams of one age. A statistical analysis revealed that natural factors cause minor and infrequent shifts in the sex ratios of the litter. The preparation made from the blood of mares pregnant with male embryos was called MGS (male gonadotropic serum). He also prepared FGS (female gonadotropic serum) from the blood of mares pregnant with female embryos. An injection of MGS in the sheep markedly increased the proportion of male lambs in their litter, bringing the ratio up to 2 : 1, while an injection of FGS, on the contrary, cut it down to 1 : 2. An injection of the serum in the sire rams shook the parity law. Ewes impregnated by rams injected with MGS brought 142 male lambs to 100 ewe lambs (the sex porportion changing to almost 3 : 2). An injection of FGS led to a shift in the opposite direction : instead of 142, only 63 male to 100 female offspring were obtained (the proportion being almost 3 : 5. In a

There is a custom which is known as nose-boring of sons amongst Hindus all over India. A woman whose sons have died, get the nose of her new born son bored and puts on it a nose-ring, indicative of the fact that the child is not a boy but a girl. It is a general belief that women live longer than men. Even Yama, the god of death, likes a boy than a girl. This indicates the lower position of women. The nose-ring is worn till marriage, when it is removed by the bride's mother, or in her absence by some other elderly female relation. A gift in money is made to the bride-groom after this removal. Sometime the person concerned performs different rites and pujas on this occasion.

Vrata ritual :

We now narrate certain vrata rites to illustrate the position of women of Bengal. More details about the same will be available in different other places.[37] There are a series of rites and ceremonies which are essentially based on the Hindu sastras. But there are others which can claim no such authority but they are popular and powerful enough to mould the folk-society. These are known as *vratas*. Before a woman perform vrata rituals, she should get the sanction from the father if she is a maiden, from the husband if she is a married woman and her husband is alive, from the sons if she is a widow, according to Manu. But the folk-women do not always abide by the doctrines of Manu; they do not generally observe the laws that Manu said about the vrata rites. They take the decision by themselves whenever they perform such rites and rituals.

Abanindranath Tagore in his "Banglar Brata" has classified

third varient the experiments the serum was injected in both rams and ewes. The MGS increased the number of male lambs and the FGS the number of ewe lambs. In the first case the proportion was one female to two males : in the second, one male to two females.

In the opinion of experts, the importance of Shulov's work goes far beyond the practical aspects of sheep-breeding and animal husbandary in general. Sex ratio control is one of the most challenging problems facing biology including human biology. Hardly any expectant parents have ever remained indifferent to whether they would have a boy or a girl. In our days the sex of a baby can be discovered in advance through involved laboratory investigations at an early stage of pregnancy.

("Male or Female ?" by R. Nasyrov, *Sputnik*, November, 1969)

37. Tagore, Abanindranath "Banglar Vrata", (Visva-Bharati), Calcutta, Bagchi, Prabodh Kumar, "Female Folk-Rites in Bengal, *Man-in-India*, 1922, Chakravarti, Chintaharan, "The Hindu Rituals, Calcutta, 1957, Sen, Gopinath, "Rituals of Womenfolk of Bengal." *Indian Folklore*, 1959, Sen, D. C. "Glimpse of Bengali Life," Calcutta, 1915, Ray, Kamini Kumar, "Laukik Savdokosh," Calcutta, 1958, and Ray, S. K. "Vrata Rituals of Bengal," Calcutta, Chakravarti, Sunil "*Rarer Paus Aglano*" (The festival of Paus) in the book "Lokayata Bangla," Calcutta, 1969 etc.

these vratas under three groups. 1. Shastric vrata ; 2. Nari vrata and 3. Kumari vrata. This is not a comprehensive classification. These vratas can be brought under two board divisions : (i) Shastric and (ii) Prachalita, i.e. those in vogue amonst the femalefolk.

Unmarried girls from 5 to 6 or 8 to 9 years of age perform certain vratas which are popularly known as Kumari vrata. Their performances consist in the representation of desires by drawings, diggings of miniature tanks, etc. and the offering of flowers to the gods or the goddesses for the attainment of desired end, and last of all in listening to the *katha* or ritual tale, if there be any. The purpose of this type of vratas is to get better wed in general. The priest and his incantations have no place here. Let us mention *haricharan vrata.* Haricharan Vrata i.e., to worship the feet of Lord Hari who is the protector of the world. This is performed in the month of *Baisakh* (April-May). Woman who worships Him will have to give a pair of gold or silver sandal, one pair of new cloth and napkin to one who acts as priest.[38] It is to be noted here that there is no need for a priest or a Brahmin for certain vratas and in general it is the womenfolk themselves who act as priests or perform vratas on their own where no priest is necessary. For example, in the Bhaduli Vrata or Bhadrali Vrata which starts in the month of Bhadra (Aug.-Sept.) young girls while going to nearest pond recite couplet of following type : "O River, O River, That will meet here, The Goddess of the Rain, Will put an end to unhappiness."

Thus, they recite various types of *chharas* and pray to the Rain God for better lot of their brother, father, husband and so on.[39]

Next we come to the month of Aswin and Kartik (Oct.-Nov.-Dec.) when the women of Bengal perfom Durga Sasthi Vrata, Saubhagya Chaturthi Vrata, Jitastami Vrata, Yampukur Vrata, Kulkulati Vrata[40] etc. All these vratas have got their individuality are handed down from mother to daughter.

Suvachani Vrata belongs to the special domain of the married women. No priests are required for the performance of this Vrata or any of the rites connected with it. It is performed on Sundays or Thursdays in the early hours of the morning. The female devotee takes the vow in the previous day praying to the Goddess Suvachani for the welfare of some of her particular relatives e.g. for the cure from

38. Bagchi Prabodh Kumar, op. cit.

39. Sen, Gopinath, op. cit.

নদী, নদী কোথায় যাও ? বাপ-ভাইয়ের বার্তা দাও, সোয়ামি-শ্বশুরের বার্তা দাও।

or, সাগর, সাগর বন্ধি, তোমার সঙ্গে সন্ধি। ভাই গেছেন বাণিজ্যে, বাপ গেছেন বাণিজ্যে, সোয়ামি গেছেন বাণিজ্যে, বাপ, ভাই, সোয়ামীর নিরাপদ।

40. Ibid.

some serious illness, for success in examination, sometimes in litigation, for the safe arrival of some relatives from a distant place, for the fulfilment of some desires and the type things. The devotee sits facing the east and invokes the goddess with *dhyanmantra*. The ceremony ends with the distribution of betel leaves, betel nuts, sweetmeats etc. to the invited ladies and girls. These are practistd by the grown-up ladies after marriage.

Folktale and legends :

In the following pages we will deal with a few folktales :

Once there was a woman who was such a good wife that she was known as *Pativrata* or "the devoted spouse". One day she was pounding rice when her husband came in and asked for a glass of drinking water. She dropped the pounder in the middle of a stroke and as the blessing of the Gods was upon her, it remained hanging suspended in the air as it was. A woman of the neighbourhood who happened to be there saw the miracle and was astonished. "How can this be ?" she asked. "This comes from the devotion to my husband", she answered.

Her friend came home and said to her husband : "The next time when I will pounder rice you ask me for a glass of drinking water and I will prove to you what a devoted spouse I am." He did so, but she instead of being able to keep the pounder in the middle of a stocke caused it fall on the head of her husband which broke his skull. The husband naturally cried out. On hearing the cry all the neighbours ran up, beat and abused her, and one of them made the following verse :

Pativarata jo nari hoe
Musal aisase tange soe
Kulta hoye pativrata chal
Apne pati ke phore bhal.[41]

(A devoted wife can keep the grain pounder suspended in the air but if a vicious woman tries to imitate her, she breaks her husband's forehead).

The next story speaks of Banke Chhail and his wife :

Once there was a Mussalman gentleman whose wife was such shrewd that every morning she used to give him a sound beating with her slipper. She had a daughter and when she grew up her parents were on the look out for a husband for her ; but the temper of her mother was so well-known that no one would dare to marry into such a family. Finally, one day a notorious character, who was known as

41. NIN & Q, op. cit.

Banke Chhail, came and proposed for the girl, and her father was so glad to settle her in life that he agreed to the match at once. They were married.

Before the marriage ceremony took place Banke Chhail brought a parrot, a cat, and a dog, and when he was taking his bride home he took his animals too with him. On the way, the pair sat down by a well for a rest when a number of village dogs came out and began to bark at Banke Chhail's dog. His dog barked at them in return and his master said, "Do you dare to bark without my leave?" Saying so he punished his dog. This astonished his wife; but they went on a little father and as the morning broke the birds in the trees began to sing. As soon as the parrot heard them, it commenced to chatter. Banke Chhail at once pulled it out of the cage and wrung its neck. "You fool", said he, "you did not remember that you belonged to Banke Chhail and you dare open your mouth without his order!"

His wife was still more surprised, but she said nothing and they went on. They sat down to rest in a garden and soon a rat appeared. Banke Chhail called to his cat and said: "Catch me that rat." The cat at once obeyed his order and killed it. This annoyed Banke Chhail. He said, "You fool, you dare to kill the rate without my leave; I ordered you to catch the rat", saying so, he killed the cat. When his wife saw all these she began to think to herself, "What a terrible husband I have got. It would be well for me to obey him." And when they reached home she found it to be of her interest to obey him in all things. Thus she became a very loving and obedient wife, so much so, that when sometime after her father came to pay her a visit, she looked out through *achnik* in the door and was afraid to admit him without the leave of her husband. By and by, Banke Chhail came home and said to her, "Your respected father is waiting at the door, why did you not let him in?" "How could I do so without your leave?" she answered. Then Banke Chhail went out and brought his father-in-law in. When he saw how changed his daughter was, he said to his son-in-law: "You know what a life my wife obliges me to live. I wish you would tell me the secret how you succeeded in tutoring your wife to behave. Perhaps I may be able to deal with my wife in the same way." Said Banke Chhail, "Good sir, bring a brick and some moist clay and make me a lamp saucer out of that." "It is easy," quoth he, "to mould the soft clay, but when the clay gets hard no power on the earth could mould." "In short," said Banke Chhail, "your wife's character is fixed and cannot be mended. I dealt with my wife in season and you see the result.[42] Hearing all these the old man went home sorrowful.

42. Ibid.

There is a Bengali proverb that indicate the idea : *kancha na noaile bansh pakle kare tash tash,*[43] meaning, strike while the iron is red or bend the tree while it is tender. There is another saying in which it is said, *jhee jabdo shile, bau jabdo kile* which means maidservant can be taught a lesson with a grinding stone, and the daughter-in-law when set at fisticuffs.

It may not be out of place to mention here in this connection that different aspects of social life are depicted in proverb which we will see in the appendices. It will be seen that no aspect of daily life are absent from the creation of the folk-poets. Folksayings and proverbs either describe some basic facts of the folk life and living or they are used for making fun of to ridicule some one. In the observation of the folk poets the peasants, milkmen, weavers, oilmen, blacksmiths, Kayasthas, Vaidyas, Faquirs, Pirs, maidservants, Hindu-Muslim relations, tenants, *rayats,* zamindars, thives, decoits, pilferers, poor, rich, capitalists, businessmen, beggers, unemployed, ghosts, witch, one-eyed, etc. have taken their real forms. However, we were discussing some aspects of folktales and legends here. Let us, therefore, proceed to that. Below is another story that describes the position of a soldier and his virtuous wife.

Once upon a time there was a soldier who had a beautiful wife, but he was very poor. At last his wife said, "My dear husband, our wealth is gone. What is the use of our living like this any longer ? You had better go abroad and earn money for our support."

"How can I go abroad without money for the journey ?" he asked. "It is bad," she said, "to eat on charity in the house of the father-in-law. I will get money for you from there and then you can go abroad and seek your fortune." The soldier agreed to the proposal. When he was on the way to go she asked him, "How shall either of us know if the other has ceased to love ?"

"How can I provide for this ?" he asked.

So she went to the garden and picking up two buds of Chameli, came to him and said, "Let each of us keep one of these buds, and whichever of us leaves another his or her bud will blossom."

When he was starting, she put on her finest clothes and was taking leave of him, but he turned away from her. She fancied that he did not like her dress, so she went and changed it for another. But even then he turned away his face from her. She was grieved and said, "My dear husband, what have I done that you have lost your love for me ?"

43. কাঁচা না নোয়াইলে বাঁশ, পাকলে করে টাস টাস।
ঝি জব্দ শিলে, বউ জব্দ কিলে।

"Fine dress," he answered, "does not befit the wife of a soldier he said. "Take my sword and shield. Now give me the shield and hit me as hardly as you can with the sword."

She did as he told her, but he parried all her blows. Then he said "Keep these arms and in time of need use them to protect your virtues."

With this advice he left her and went to a distant city, where he took service with a Raja and guarded the gate of his palace. Everyday he used to look at the Chameli bud which he kept tied up in his turban. One morning the Raja was sitting at his gate and saw the soldier looking at the bud. He was curious, and sent one of his servants to see what the soldier was looking at. The soldier said, "I do my duty honestly, what concern the Raja has with my private affairs?"

The Raja became still more curious and himself going to the soldier asked him about it. The soldier told about the buds. Soon after the Raja went on his travel and came to the city in which the soldier lived. He was a man of dissolute habits, so he sent for an old woman and told her to bring the most beautiful woman in the city to see him. She went to the wife of the soldier and proposed to her that she should visit the Raja. She agreed to go for four lakhs of rupees, but the Raja gave her five lakhs, she kept him engaged in conversation for some time, and when he tried to approach her she drew her sword, fell upon him and wounded him seriously.

When he recovered from his wounds he came back to his own city. Coming to the palace the Raja called his guard and told him all that happened. He showed him all his wounds that was the work of his wife. The Raja approved of her fidelity to the husband and advanced him some money so that he could go back to his beloved. The soldier did as the Raja desired.[44]

Another story describes the fate of a shrewish wife :

Once there was a wife who was so cruel that every morning she used to say to her mother-in-law : "You wretched widow, may I see the day when your face is blackened, your hair is shaved and you are led round city mounted on an ass." To this, the old woman would say "As long as my son is kind to me you can do no evil to me. *Parameswar* grant that he may never come under your influence." Once the wife began to moan and complained of internal pain. When her husband came and asked what he could do for her, she said, "This desase is very difficult to cure. The only remedy is that you get your mother's head shaven, her face blackened and her led round the city on the back of an ass.".

44. ibid.

The husband went at once to his wife's mother and said, "Your daughter is sick unto death and it has been announced by the astrologer that she will never recover unless you allow your head to be shaved, your face blackened and are carried on the back of an ass around the city." When she heard this the old woman wept sore; but her affection for her daughter was great so she allowed to be done to her that son-in-law had said. When the procession reached the house of her daughter, her husband went in and said to his wife, "Come and see, we have done the same as you desired". On this she pretended that pain had left her and she came out. Taking her own mother as her mother-in-law she cried :

Dekh mai ki chali
Seer mundi, murh kali

(See how your mother comes, hair shaven face blackened).

To this her husband replied,

Dekh nari pher pheri
Ma meri hai ki teri[45]

(Look again wife, whether it is my mother or thine).

Facing reality she was overwhelmed with shame. From this time the wife gave up his shrewishness.

This story also provides another fact, how a mother feels for her daughters. She is ever ready to undertake any amount of trouble for the welfare of her daughter.

All these illustrate the position of women in different walks of their life. We will make another treatment of some of their roles later. Prior to that we will mention some songs that reflect the character and attitude of a newly wedded girl and her relatives in her new home.

Folksongs and sayings :

There are different types of songs that depict the position of women in the society and family. Let us place an example where a girl who has just got married and come to her in-law's house. She is a newcomer and her conduct is under the searching scrutiny of almost everyone in the family. There are every vigilant eyes of the mother-in-law and sister-in-law from which there is no escape. In this new set-up

45. ibid.

she can only depend on her husband. Besides, her *devar* (husband's younger brother) and *bhabiji* (husband's elder brother's wife) are also dependable. Here is a song that reflects the affection between *bhabiji* and *nanad* (husband's younger or elder sister).

Between the nanad and bhabiji
What a happy bond there is
There is none like it anywhere
For while we have been parted
And I feel like crying
When I remember her.[46]

The following is a song that speaks of casteism and love affairs. Here a girl of an upper caste family addressing his lover who belongs to a lower caste says,

If you are willing
And I am willing too
What would castes do ?

The mystery of love is ancient and incomprehensible. So it is said *piriter nao pahareo chale,* the boat of love can sail in the hill. And love is a heavenly bliss so there is a popular saying : *pirit aar git jorer kaj nai,* the love and the song cannot be had by force. Although it is said that *pirit jakhan jote futkalai fote, pirit jakhan chote, dhenkite fele kote*[47] which means when love appears it gushes like peas frying, when it goes out one is pounded, as it were, in the husking machine. There fore for the attainment of its success it is prepared to enter into any argument. Thus, as soon as she enters into a family after undergoing all sorts of hardships of the love affairs she attains the position of a housewife, and as soon as she gets a child she attains the positions of a mother, for which she is ever proud of. It is in the womenfolk, one gets his wife or lady-love, and it is in her he again gets his mother, who possesses the highest status and position in the society.

Love often disobeys social dictum. It has also challenged caste barrier. There are sound advice for a newly wedded wife. The following song is collected from the Bhal region of Gujarat. When the daughter leaves for her husband's home following is the song that is sung :

46. **Barua, Hem op. cit.**

47. পীরিতের নাও পাহাড়েও চলে।
পীরিত আর গীত জোরের কাজ নয়।
পীরিত যখন জোটে ফুটকলাই ফোটে,
পীরিত যখন ছোটে ঢেঁকিতে কেলে কোটে।

"Veil your face before father-in-law
fall at your mother-in-law's feet
speak humbly to your husband's elder brother
do not quarrel with his sister.
His younger brother is the pet of the house
suffer his teasing
and lay your hands in
blessings on his younger
sister when she leaves
to be married.[48]

The husband is going away to a distant place in connection with service or business but the wife does not like it. She says, "My sweetheart, why do you go abroad ?"

Don't you forget to write a piece of paper ;
The pangs of separation wring my heart.
My sweetheart please come home in the months of rains.
Lest you catch cold in that wet season.
When I go to the gardens I feel so happy ;
But coming home I burn to ashes ![49]

She feels lonely without the husband. Even she is not getting his letter for the last twelve years. And then a letter comes to her for which she waited long. The song goes thus :

Oh my dear husband, you have gone so far,
Far in the south country ;
Here in this banyan grove
while fetching water from the well
everyday, I feel for you.

48. Jadav, J. D. "Folk-life and folk-songs of the Bhal Region," *Folklore*, Vol. 1. No. 4, July-August, 1960.

49. Patel, Madhubhai "Some aspects of Gujarati folksongs," *Folklore*, Vol. II. No. 6, Nov-Dec., 1961.

and also

ভার্যৈকচারিণী-গৃঢ়বিশ্রম্ভা দেববৎ পতিমাত্মকুলানবর্ততে । বাৎস্যায়ন ।।১।।
তন্মেতেন কুটুম্বচিন্তামাত্মনি সংনিবেশয়েৎ ।।২।।
বেশ্ম চ শুচি সুসংমৃষ্টস্থানং
বিরচিতবিবিধকুসমং সংস্কৃতভূমিতলং
হৃদ্যদর্শনং স্ত্রিয়বণাচরিতবলিকর্ম
পূজিত দেবায়তনং কুর্যাৎ, ।। ৩ ।।
পশ্চাৎ সংবেশনং পূর্বমুত্থানম্
অনবোধনংচ সুপ্তস্য ।। ১৭ ।।
স্নস্য চ সায়স্য পরেদ্যো
হনাখ্যানং ভর্তুর্মন্ত্রিতস্য চ ।। ৩০ ।।
নায়কমিত্রাণাং চ প্রগল্ভলেপতাম্বূলদানৈঃ পূজনং স্যাদতঃ । ।। ৩৬ ।।

Everyday for twelve years standing on the well step
I have eagerly waited longing,
longing for your letter.
And truly after twelve years
the letter of my husband came
but there was none to read it to me.

What a tragedy !

Then there are songs where we get another picture. This song is self explanatory. It is sung by a woman addressing another whose husband is away from her.

The woman has tightened the border of garment
round her waist and plucks lentil
Oh, maiden, the crows are eating your stale rice
removing the cover of the straw hat.

The woman then answers :

Oh, sister, I shall not eat the stale rice,
Let the crows consume them.
My husband is away from home,
I pass sleepless nights ; let the crows eat the stale rice.

The first woman sings again :

Oh maiden, if you do not eat the stale rice
You will suffer from hunger.
Your husband is away now
Should you go and give a visit to your secret lover.

The above cannot incite the woman who has no secret lover. She says :

পরিজনে দাক্ষিণ্যম ॥ ৪৩ ॥
জ্ঞাতিকুলস্থানভিগমনমন্তত্র ব্যসনোৎসবাভ্যাম ॥ ৪৮ ॥

অর্থাৎ ভার্যা একচারিণী ও গভীর বিশ্বাসবতী হইবেন, পতিকে দেববৎ মান্য করিয়া তাঁহার অনুকূলভাবে অবস্থান করিবেন। তিনি পতির মতানুসারে পরিবারের চিন্তা নিজে গ্রহণ করিবেন, গৃহকে উত্তমরূপে সম্মার্জন করিয়া পবিত্র রাখিবেন, তাঁহার গৃহখানি যেন দেখিতে মনোরম হয়, ত্রি-সন্ধ্যায় তাহাতে যেন সর্বজীবের উদ্দেশ্যে ভোজ্যবস্তু প্রদত্ত হয়, এবং, দেবালয়ে যেন পূজাবিধি সম্পাদিত হয়। স্বামী শয়ন করিবার পর তিনি শয়ন করিবেন, কিন্তু স্বামীর উঠিবার পূর্বেই উঠিয়া পড়িবেন। স্বামী সুপ্ত হইয়া থাকিলে তাঁহাকে জাগাইবেন না, তিনি নিজের ধন এবং স্বামীর সহিত যে পরামর্শ তাহা অপর ব্যক্তির নিকট বলিবেন না। তিনি তাঁর অনুসারে স্বামীর বন্ধুবর্গকে মাল্যচন্দনাদি অনুলেপন ও তাম্বুল প্রদান করিয়া সৎকার করিবেন এবং বিপদ ও উৎসবের সময় ভিন্ন জ্ঞাতিগৃহে গমন করিবেন না। (শ্রীবিধুশেখর ভট্টাচার্য। ত দেব)

I will not eat the stale rice
let the crows eat them.
My suckling child is suffering from fever
he is tossing about in severe pain
Let the crows eat the stale rice.

These are nothing but frank expressions of the commonfolk. In a classless society such songs bear the idea of a community while in a class society it sides with the depressed and struggling masses. Thus we see that a girl whose husband is away is feeling herself in the confinement. She is all alone. Nature opens out into light and colour, but this is nothing to her without her husband. The following song describes another idea,

In Malava grows the *henna*
It has dyed Gujarat entirely,
The *henna's* colour comes up.

My younger devar is dear to me,
He brings the *henna* plant for me,
The *henna's* colour comes up.

He pressed the leaves and made a paste and filled a cup,
Bhabi, dye your hands with *henna*,
The *henna's* colour comes up.

What shall I do by dyeing my hands, *devar*,
One who would see the *henna*-dyed hands has gone,
The *henna's* colour comes up.

One lakh of rupees in cash shall I give,
If someone will go across the river,
The *henna's* colour comes up.

Write to my lord this much,
Your mother has passed away, come home,
The *henna's* colour comes up.[50]

Often, a newly wedded girl is inexperienced in the ways of life. In her modesty, she makes a frank adminission of it. The following is an instance in point:

The bullock wears a bell, the buffalo a clapper
Do not be angry, I am still a raw girl.

Here is a song from Kannada that presents a picture of poverty-stricken family. Yet the girl is grateful for life to her mother for nourishing it. She sings,

50. Barua, Hem op. cit.

Born of a poor woman, I never saw the *arati* lamp
Never could I put on a silken *sari*
Woven with gold thread, mother;
Yet, how much I owe to you for the milk I suckled.

The setting of poverty is evident in the song given below. It is not unusual for a husband, poor as he is, not to be able to buy a *sari* of one rupee for his wife even once in a year,

Buy me a cloth to wear
Worth one rupee at least
It was that you should care for me
that I made you my yoke-fellow.

Poverty and exploitation drive the peasant away from his homeland, the husband of a peasant wife of Uttar Pradesh wants to migrate to the city in search of a job and food. But his wife does not want him to do so. She wants him to live the ancestral life of his village. So she sings,

I fall at your feet, darling,
do not go to the town;
eat the wheat-bread
with the cooked mustard leaves,
pass your days in the village.[51]

Here is another lament song by which we get a picture of a newly wedded girl who has no parents. It is the maternal uncle who is her gurdian on the paternal side. The girl is far away from the maternal uncle owing to her marriage. She is away for long. She does not get any news of theirs. She wishes to come to him. She sings seeing a person known to her who resides in the same place where her maternal uncle lives,

Who is going through the river
plying a red paddler
plying a blue paddler.
Please tell my maternal uncle to take me as
I feel like going to him.

Maternal uncle replies:

Oh my dear niece, wait till the month of Ashar
bearing all tyranny and fisticuff

51. Ibid.

I will come with a pankhi boat
and will fetch you.[52]

Here is an example where a lady-love makes other people jealous by winning the whole love of her husband to herself :

"My mother-in-law looks not at me, and when she looks there is a frown and crooked glance on her face ; my husband's sister speaks cruel and piercing words ever and anon ; what shall I say of others ?— their conduct makes me tremble. O dear friend, all my fault is that my beloved looks at me with affection in his eyes."

Very pretty is the picture of the newly married maiden, who is distracted between love and embarrassment :

"If she sleeps, she cannot gaze at the face of her beloved ; if she does not sleep, her beloved would embarrass her by taking her by the hand. Distracted by such thoughts, the fair lady can neither sleep nor keep awake."

The sorrow of the parted lover is too hard to bear ;

"The mango-shoots here smoke with swarms of bees ; Here the Asoka glow with bursting buds of flower. Here the branches of the Kimsuka are coal-coloured with their dark shoots ; alas, where can I rest my weary eyes ? Everywhere fate is cruel to me."

And here is another picture where we find misunderstanding between the mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law. After the marriage of her son who is the only earning member of the family, mother-in-law is subordinate to her daughter-in-law. She says it is my daughter-in-law who is having all happiness. Thus she laments, "Due to the death of my dear husband it is my daughter-in-law who has become the housewife and is enjoying her life and having all the happines of the world. Exactly the same fortune I had with me. But that has been snatched away abruptly from me by the God of misery, etc. This attitude of the mother-in-law has annoyed the daughter-in-law so much so that she does not mind to express the following at the death of her mother-in-law,

Sasuri malo sakale
kheye deye jadi bela thake
to kanbo ami bikale[53]

52. ভাগ্নী— মেগ্‌না গাংগ (-অ) দিয়া
লাল 'চৈর' বাইয়া, নীল 'চৈর' বাইয়া
আমার মামুরে কইও গিয়া—নাইওর নিত আইয়া।
মামা— থাক থাক বাগনী গো কিলমুর খাইয়া
আষাঢ় মাস (-অ) নিমু নাইওরে পানসি নাও বাইয়া।
—(সিলেটী ভাষাতত্ত্বের ভূমিকা, শিবরতন লাহিড়ী ঢাকা, ১৩৬৮)

53. শাশুড়ী ম'ল সকালে, খেয়ে দেয়ে যদি বেলা থাকে তো কাঁদবো আমি বিকালে।
—(বাংলার লোকসাহিত্য, ২য় খণ্ড,—আশুতোষ ভট্টাচার্য)

This means, the mother-in-law expired in the morning, if I find time afternoon finishing lunch I will weep for her then.

The following song describes the position of widowed-sister who had lost her beloved and becoming totally ruined came to her brother for a shelter. The brother refused to offer any shelter to her. She wanted a small corner of any room of her brother's house where she may stay for the rest of life. But the brother did not agree to her proposal. He said that each and every corner of his house were fully occupied by others, so how were it possible for him to entertain her requests. She was refused even a corner of the house when her neighbours were offering palacial room to her for staying. If she accepted the offer she would earn bad repuation and they would call her a loose charactered woman. Everybody would look down upon her. So she is facing an unbearable situation, got annoyed to her brother's wife since she thought it is she who has influenced her brother for which a sister is suffering in that way. Thus a painful picture is drawn in the following song.

Due to the death of my parents,
due to the death of my husband
there is no place of a sister
in her brother's house, oh God.
Oh brother, please allot me a
corner of your house for my stay for the night.
There is no room even where an woven can be placed
there is no place where you can stay.

Oh god, after the death of my parents,
after the death of my husband, a sister has no
place at her parent's house.

Looking at my misfortune my good neighbours offer
better shelters for me
I have no alternative but to accept
that and to go to the neighbours.[54]

again the mother-in-law laments with the following words:

মাঃ— কত পোয়া পুরইলা গো, পুইয়া করলা ছাই,
কার কাছে করবাম নালিশ জাগা তো আর নাই।
সুখ কর গো পুতের বউ সুখ তোমারে দিছে,
এই সুখ আছিল আমার ডাকাইতে লইয়া গেছে।
এই কপালে আছিল আমার দুখ ভরা থাল,
এই কপালে আছিল আমার ঠোকরে ভাঙতো গাল। (লোক সাহিত্য, ঢাকা)

54. বোন :—মায়াবাবা মরণে শিরের সিন্দুর বিষমে,
ভাইয়ের বাড়িত বইনের ঠাঁই নাই।

Here is another picture in which it is known that a sister disobeys her mother-in-law's order for her brother. The newly wedded lady is staying away from her parent's home. After sometime her brother came to see her. Looking the brother in her husband's home her joy knows no bound. The mother-in-law asks the daughter-in-law to prepare food from coarse rice etc. for her brother but in this instance she refuses to obey her mother-in-law. She says,

I shall serve my brother with fine rice
My sister-in-law will eat the coarse one.
My brother will repose on a sofa couch
And his wife would lie on a mattress of straw.

Then there is another picture which we know from a popular saying,

narir satata ghorar takkar
nadir gati bojha dastur[55]

Which means, the hypocrisy of the women, the push of the horse and the movement of the river are very difficult to determine. Obviously, it is said aiming at an unchaste lady.

Here is another saying about the widow : *Rarimagir atharo that.*[56] It indicates that a widow serves eighteen men. It means a widow needs to satisfy everybody for her livelihood.

চুলাপাড় দেও গো ঠাঁই, আইজের নিশি পোহাইয়া যাই
পাইলা খুইব ঠাঁই নাই, চুলাপাড় জায়গা নাই।
বুঝাই গো, পড়শী বাড়িত জায়গার সীমা নাই।

বাবাবাবা মরণে শিরের সিন্দুর বিবনে
ভাইয়ের বাড়িত বইনের ঠাঁই নাই।
উগার (মাচার) তলে দেও গো জায়গা
আইজের নিশি (খাইক্যা) যাই।
মুরশী থইব কোন ঠাঁই, উগার তলে জায়গা নাই।

(লোকসাহিত্য, ঢাকা, ৪র্থ খণ্ড)

55. নারীর সততা, ঘোড়ার টক্কর, নদীর গতি, বোঝা দস্তর।
নারীর বল, চোখের জল, (বাংলা প্রবাদ)।

56. রাঁড়ী মাগীর আঠার ঠাঁট।
রাঁড় খাঁটিয়ে চড় খাওয়া।
রাঁড়ী হয়ে ভোগ বালাই,
সবার আগে তারে সাবলাই.। (ঐ)

Chharas and proverbs :

Below is a Bengali *chhara* which speaks of polygamy.

One lady is cooking and serving
Another takes her meal,
The third goes to parents' house
without taking her food.[57]

It suggests that among the three wives of a person the first and the second wives are friendly to each other at least for that moments, while the third wife is sentimental. Being embarrassed she has left her husband's place for parent's house. It will happen once again when the first and third will be friendly and the second be annoyed. In this way, in the next turn, the second and the third may be a party when the first will remain all alone. Or, it may so happen that all the three will be friendly for the time being or will be engaged in quarrelling with each other, and may not be in speaking terms too. Next day they may be seen again loving each other and in joking mood. This is a continuous process.

In another Bengali *chhara* the position and status of a mother is depicted. It is said about the mother that,

(1) The milk is sweet, sugar is sweet and cream is sweeter
But mother is sweetest of all.

(2) What do you say about maternal aunt ?
What do you say about paternal aunt ?
What do you say about Brindaban ?
There has been flower in the barren tree
There is nothing parallel to mother.

(3) You may say about flattened and fried rice
You may say about fried rice
But nothing is as good as rice
you may say about paternal aunt
You may say about maternal aunt

57. বৃষ্টি পড়ে টাপুরটুপুর নদে এল বান
শিব ঠাকুরের বিয়ে হল তিন কন্যা দান
এক কন্যা রাঁধেন বাড়েন আর এক কন্যা খান
আরেক কন্যা না খেয়ে বাপের বাড়ী যান।

But there is nothing who is
equal to mother.[58]

Thus evey Indian regards the mother and the mother-land as greater than heaven *Janani Janmbhumicha swargadapi gariyashi,*[59] it is said again *matar jatir bhagya niyanta,*[60] it is mother who creates the future of the nation or the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world. It is, therefore, said *mayer cheye daradi taake bale dan,*[61] she who is more compassionate than the mother is but a witch. This is why mother's curse is feared as goddess's wrath. This we also know from the mother of Shivaji,(1627-1680) who founded the Maratha Kingdom. Shivaji's mother thunders,

Beware of a mother's curse
Its fire shall scorch thy kingdom wide
Son, mediate thy purpose high
And fill thy soul with fire
The blood of Sanbhaji doth cry
His wrong is undressed [62]

Thus it is said by Asvaghosa,

In the words of women there is honey :
In their heart there is deadly poison

Repeating this half-verse, Bhartrihari suggests :

Hence doth one drink from those lips.
And strike at the heart with the first!

But in the hand of ungrateful son sometime a mother gets humilation. His devotion to mother is transferred to his wife being enchanted by her love and we will see later how a mother reacts under such a condition

In ancient days when women were confined to the four walls of her domesticated house, she passed her times with her own womanish

58. দুধ মিঠা চিনি মিঠা, আর মিঠা ননী,
ভার চ ইতে অধিক মিঠা মাও বড় জননী।
কিসের মাসী কিসের পিসী কিসের বৃন্দাবন,
মরা গাছে ফুল ফুটিছে মা বড় ধন।
চিড়ে বল মুড়ি বল, ভাতের সমান নয়,
পিসী বল মাসী বল, মায়ের সমান নয়।
59. জননী জন্মভূমিশ্চ স্বর্গাদপি গরিয়সী,
60. মাতাই জাতির ভাগ্য নিয়ন্তা।
61. মায়ের চেয়ে দরদী তাকে বলে ডান,
মায়ের দয়া নেই, মাসীর দয়া।
62. SFQ, Florida, U. S. A.

ideas and desires. During that time there was no need for female education of the modern type. In course of time the field of activities of the womenfolk have widened. Thus it has become a part and parcel of her life to get herself educated in the same way as that of a male member of the society. Previously it was a matter of regret to use umbrella and to wear shoe for a woman. But that idea is no more in existence now. Now it is a shame for her not to be smartly dressed and to wear shoe and now most women are ashamed if they are not properly educated.

It does need no clarification that the folksong deals with some common emotion and motives of the folk-people. As such, it does not degenerate from its essential genus relative homogeneous and collective entity. It expressess the relation of individual with contemporary society. Here is a song that is sung by a peasant woman of Karnatak to praise her husband where we get a picture of individual reaction :

> None like my husband all around I behold
> like pearls are the teeth of my beloved
> joy pervades everywhere when I hear his voice.

Here the imagination of the folk poets seems to reach the sublime heights of beauty of times. Following is an excerpt from a description of a village belle :

> Oh daughter of the poor, your waist is fast growing slim
> whilst walking you are a tender plantain in sprout
> If you speak, it's singing of cuckoo."

What a delectable description of the daughter of the poor.

In different songs we find that a mother-in-law envies her daughter -in-law. This is a social conflict which has arisen from the struggle for power. The sisters-in-law join the mother and place fuel in the hearth (*agune gritahute*). And when this lady gets wed she too faces the same consequences in the place of her husband, so it is said *nanadero nanad ache,*[63] a sister-in-law has also her sister-in-law. The difference of opinion and attitude between the mother-in-law and her daughter-in-law sometimes leads the mother-in-law to speak about her

63. ননদেরও ননদ আছে।
ননদিনীর কথাগুলো নিমেগিমে মাখা।
ননদিনী রায়বাঘিনী, দাঁড়িয়ে আছে কাল সাপিনী।
ননদিনী রায়বাঘিনী পাড়ায় পাড়ায় কুচ্ছ গায়,
ননদিনী যদি মরে সুখের বাতাস বইবে গায়।

daugher-in-law in unchaste words such as *kalir bau ghar bhangani,*[64] means, modern wife of Kaliyuga is the cause of breaking up home. She is against the Hindu joint-family, or *adure bau nangta haie nache,*[65] a pet wife does whatever she likes. In order to rule these housewives the folk medicine is *bau jabda kile,*[66] the wife talks by fist. Thus from all that has been said so long about the womenfolk, it is very difficult to ascertain a real position of a woman from folklore. They have different roles, different ways of lives. Then it is said, *nari chhalanamayee,*[67] woman is fraudulent. There is anoher saying by which we know that *hindur dari, musalmaner nari, ganger kule bari, bane chare gaie a chare biswas nai,*[68] the beard of a Hindu, the women of the Muslim community, a house near the bank of a river, a cow that grazes in the forests—these four are not to be believed.

Although it is said that : *akkele sakal bandi, jale bandi mach, strir kache purus bandi, chhale bandi gach,*[69] which means, everybody is a prisoner to common sense, a fish is captive in water, man is panegyrist to wife while a tree is confined to its bark. Even though it has been said that, women should be avoided in one's travel, *pathi nari bibarjita*[70] To avoid repitition we stop quoting *chharas,* proverbs etc. here because they will be available in large numbers in the appendices of this study. Readers are requested to look at those for having a more clear idea about the folklore of women of Bengal—their position, status and influence.

A critical look into various parts of the life of the Indian women through folklore clearly discloses the nature of their growth and development, particularly in the folk-society. The ancient women enjoyed higher status when it went to a distressing point in the middle of the 18th century to the early years of this century. During this time we were ruled by the British. We mention this for developing an idea.

We should remember here that till 1917 when the first modern organisation of women and Home Rule Movement started there was

64. কলির বউ ঘর ভাঙানী
65. আদুরে বউ ভ্যাংটা হয়ে নাচে or, লাজে বউ চুরি, পাদে যেন ডুবড়ী ॥
66. বউ জব্দ কিলে
67. নারী ছলনাময়ী
68. হিন্দুর দাড়ি, মুসলমানের নারী, গাঙ্গের কুলে বাড়ী
বনে চড়ে গাই, এ চারে বিশ্বাস নাই।
69. আকেলে সকল বন্দী, জলে বন্দী মাছ,
স্ত্রীর কাছে পুরুষ বন্দী, ছালে বন্দী গাছ।
70. পথি নারী বিবর্জিতা,
সং—আমথং চালয়েদ্বৃষ্টা পথি নারী বিবর্জিতা
জাগরণে ভয়ং নাস্তি অস্তি ক্রোধ নিবাধস্তে।

deteriorating condition of Indian womenfolk. Indian rural society is marked by solidarities such as caste, kin and village. Religion underwrites each of these solidarities and also links up the village with wider solidarities. There is a view that the village solidarity depends on caste. When an inter-village fight occurs the leaders of the dominant castes get involved and the other, especially the member of the lowest castes, are dragged into it.

There are significant differences between various religious groups and castes in matter of marriage. The social institution of marriage ensures the children born of it a recognised and legally sanctioned position in society. When marriage is monogamous, the husband and wife become the nucleus of a domestic group. It is in a polyandrous or polygmaous marriage that the elementary family is a part of a wider domestic group. Often a group of married brothers and their wives and children are found to live under a single roof under the authority of the eldest brother. Or the domestic group consists of the man and his wife, his married sons and their children. In several parts of the country people live in lineage groups. The members of the lineage lived under the same roof, or in a group of neighbouring houses, held property together, and ate together and this we mentioned earlier.

Differentiation on the basis of sex resulted in intensifing social interaction among members of the same sex. A married girl works in kitchen with her mother-in-law and sees her husband only at night. Ideally, the children in joint-family are the children of all the male members of the parental generation and discrimination by a parent in favour of his own children is regarded as reprehensible. The relation between women member in a joint-family are frequently of conflict. The mother-in-law and daughter-in-law relationship is celebrated in folklore for the intensity of its conflicts. Relation between a woman and her husband's sister and between her husband's brother's wife are also conflict-ridden. The basic fact of rivalry between brothers and the conflict between women members of the family lead even to the splitting up of the joint-family. The relation between a man and his parents-in-law is a formal one and only gradually, with the lapse of time, does it become less formal.

While there is variation between different groups in the customs and beliefs regarding marriage and kinship, the institution of marriage is a contract which a man and a woman enter into by mutual agreement, but rituals are performed on the occasion of marriage.

Early marriage is still common in India though the marriage age has been going up stage by stage in the last few decades among the

urban and educated societies. The marriage age in different countries may be quoted under in a table for point of information :

Average Marriage age in different countries

Country	*Female*	*Male*
Egypt (1948)	19.4	25.2
Canada (1951)	21.1	24.2
U. S. A. (1950)	20.4	23.2
India (1951)	14.5	20.0
Japan (1950)	23.1	25.8
U. K. (1951)	21.9	25.2
W. Germany (1946)	24.7	27.4
France (1946)	22.6	26.0

Sources (S. N. Agarwala 'The age of marriage in India', Population Index Vol. 23, 1957).

The next table shows age of marriage of different communities :

Age at marriage of religious groups in India 1891-1901, 1891-1931

Religious groups	*Female*	*Male*
Hindus	12.5	19.7
Jain	13.1	20.5
Buddhists	13.2	21.1
Muslim	14.2	22.0
Sikhs	15.0	22.5
Christians	17.1	23.9

We should remember the fact that by about 300 B.C. marriage came to be regarded as obligations for girls. For her there is no offspring except by intercourse with a man and no lineage proceeds from her. But for a man without a wife, when he shall recite the Avesta as it is mentioned in Vendidad, there may be a lineage which proceeds onwards to the future existence (Pahlvi texts, part 1).

Here public opinion is much less sympathetic to a woman who has gone astray even unwillingly, than to a man who leads a vicious life deliberately. The following sayings provide some pictures about the womenfolk of the country. Aiming a unchaste lady it is said that *bhatar thakte udmo rari,*[71] a rampant widow with her husband living or *sat bhatari savitri,*[72] a Savitri having seven husbands.

From about the beginning of the Christian era society began to insist upon abosolute virginity in the case of brides. Virgins, who had the misfortune of being criminally assaulted, had therefore hardly any

71. ভাতার থাকতে উদ্‌মো র'াড়ী। And রামাভামা মিষ্টি বড়, ভাতার লড় টক।

72. সাত ভাতারী সাবিত্রী। Again যার ভাতারের দাম যার আনা, তার বাপের দেখ বিবিয়ানা।

chance of an honourable marriage with any other person. To justify this it has been said that *ati bara gharani na pai ghar, ati bara sundari na pai bar,*[73] an ultra-good housekeeper does not find a household : an excessively beautiful girl does not find a husband. We remember another saying—*jar sange ghar karini se bara gharani, jar hate bhat khaini se bara radhuni,*[74] she is indeed a beautiful housewife with whom I have never lived, she must be a decent cook who has never served the dish prepared by herself. So the folk advice is, *gai kinbe jhapri, bau anbe fentri,*[75] buy a sleek cow ; bring home a plain looking daughter-in-law. But the bride-price or dowry system stand on the way. Needless to mention that the price by the bridegroom for a bride was originally meant for a compensation to the bride's father for the loss of her service. A portion of it soon began to be returned to the bride as a marriage-gift. The bride price was usually paid in cash or kind. In Vedic custom the bride purchase was known, but not held in esteem ; the son-in-law in such cases was described as *vijamata* or a disrespectable son-in-law. In the epic we find that at the time of the marriage of Kaikeyi, Gandhari and Madri a heavy bride-price were paid to their gurdians.

The prevalence of child marriage since the beginning of the Christian era has furthered helped its growth. The bride-price has become common in the lower section of society. Historically speaking, a great advance over the practice freely permitted the father to sell his daughter. In this way women have lost more of their power and status, they have become dependent upon men. Its consequence has resulted in the stunting of women's personality. But "it is noteworthy that India has not experienced a feminist movement ;..... it is when a world view goes counter to the claims of women and men uphold that world view as against the spirit of the times, that a feminist movement takes place. This is the experience of modern western history. But in India men came forward to uphold the claims of women and move with the times ; and in this they were sustained as much by old Indian spiritual thought as contained following the Vedanta....The aspirations of modern Indian women have to be viewed against this background."

73. অতি বড় ঘরণী না পায় ঘর, অতি বড় সুন্দরী না পায় বর।
74. যার সঙ্গে ঘর করি নি সে বড় ঘরণী, যার হাতে ভাত খাইনি সে বড় রাধুনী।
75. গাই কিনবি ঝাপড়ি বউ আনবি কেতরী
ঘর বাঁধো খাটো, গরু কেনো ছোট,
বিয়ে করো কালো, তাই পেরথের ভাল।

Bride-price tended to dwarf the personality of our women. It tended to exaggerate the husband's personality as well. Let us quote a folk-sayings of Bengal in which we know *kaner ma kande aar takar putli bandhe,*[76] bride's mother weeps but ties the purse securely. A fatherless girl apprehending her marriage to an uncertain person against money thus sing :

Marry me not to an old man, uncle,
Marry me not, uncle ;
with fresh tresses, I shall become a widow,

Marry me not to a servant, uncle,
Marry me not, uncle ;
As he receives the call, he will run away.

Marry me not to a sick person, uncle,
Marry me not, uncle ;
with fresh tresses, I shall become a widow,[77] etc. etc.

Along with this problem of bride-price which is still prevalent in the lower classes we should also consider dowry system. This is in vogue in the middle and upper middle class families in general and this

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76. কনের মা কান্দে আর টাকার পুটুলী বাঁধে।

এত টাকা নিলে বাবা ছাঁদনাতলায় বসে,
এখন কেন কাঁদ বাবা গামছা মুড়ি দিয়ে।
আম কলে থোলো থোলো তেঁতুল কলে বাঁকা,

ছাওয়াল সুদ্ধাই বিয়া করে মায়ের ঝোলায় টাকা।
আমরা যাবো পরের ঘরে পরের অধীন হয়ে,
পরের বেটী মুখ করবে মুখনাড়া দিয়ে,
দুই চক্ষের জল পড়বে বসুধারা দিয়ে। (রবীন্দ্রসংগ্রহ)

অবলার মা কাঁদে গো অবলারে লইয়া,
এত সাধের অবলারে ক্যামনে দিবাম বিয়া,
আগে যদি জানতাম আমি যাইবে কোল দিয়া
তবে তো না পালতাম আমি বুকের দুধ দিয়া। (লোকসাহিত্য ছড়া, সিরাজদ্দীন কাশিমপুরী)

It is pathetic for that moment. After sometime everything become all right when the wife requests her husbands not to left her alone. She wants to be a party of her husband's voyage. But the son of the merchant being unable to comply with her requests says,

তোমার তরে আনিব শাঁখা, গজ মুক্তার আনিব রে মালা ;
বিদায় দাও আমারে কন্যা, বাণিজ্যেতে যাই এই বেলা।

তখন কাঞ্চন মালা উত্তর দেয় :

তুমি মুক্তার মালা আমার, তুমি আমার শাঁখা,
আমি দাসীরে নিয়া চল সাথে।
আমি সিদুর বেচিয়া বেড়াব বাড়ী বাড়ী
তোমার পসরা নিয়া মাথে।

Both these separations are heart-breaking but they are reality.

77. ibid.

evil is very deeprooted. Nodoubt, dowry system was generally unknown in the early societies. It is connected with the conception of marriage as a *dana* or gift. A religious gift in kind is usually accompanied by a gift in cash or gold. It is only mediaevel times and in Rajputana that we find the dowry-system assuming alarming proportions. Because of dowry often it is difficult to find grooms for girls. And in consequence, they are forced to fade into 'definite unmarriageableness' to use Aldous Huxley's words. Thus a girl withers away. The following song is a sad undertone : "In the prime of youth, my marriage did not take place, O my cruel fate".

It is during the last days of the nineteenth century that the amount of the dowry had begun to assume scandalous proportions. A good education, a lucrative appointment of a good footing in a learned profession improved enormously the social and economic position of a youth, and made him immensely attractive as a son-in-law. He naturally fetched a high price in the marriage market. There were no such factors in the pre-British period, when society was mostly agricultural and government appointments were not so as they are at present. So naturally anything like the present scandalous dowry system did not exist in the Hindu or even in the Muslim period. The bad effect of the dowry system can be gleaned from a folksong which runs thus,

I sold my cow and paid the forest tax
I sold my bullock and paid the land revenue
This is not enough ;
My mind is disturbed, my love
I have nothing to offer now ;
From where I can pay the dowry.
For the marriage of my daughter.

In another folksong a girl is complaining to mother as to why she did not kill her just after birth. Had she been killed then her parents might not had to face the troubles for giving her in marriage to a suitable groom. The following is another heart-breaking song where a girl is asking her father not to purchase a groom for her who is after heavy dowry. The wordings of the song are :

Pita— *Ma tor bihar lagya paryachi daye*
oman sikhate dhik, andha adhik beche jeno salik tiye

Father— Oh my daughter, I am facing a difficult situation
Fie on such education which encourages to sale a son like a parakeet blindly.

Kanya— *sonar chain, sonar ghari, garba jader galaypari*

amon pasu kino na baba diya takakari
biha ki padartha, apadartha bojhe na chhela peye

Daughter—Those who are proud of golden chain and golden watch let them hang by a rope
Do not purchase such a brute one spending so much
Since the worthless man has a marriageable son
he cannot understand the actual meaning of a marriage.

Pita— *Meyer bap dumba mesh, e pora bongla desh*
nityi khachchhe mangsha kete
niya dichchhe klesh,[78]

Father— The father of the bride is nothing but a thick-tailed sheep in this unfortunate land of Bengal,
Taking home a daughter-in-law she gets tortured daily.

But the marriage took place either with the desired groom paying demanded dowry or to another where the parents or the gurdians spend as much money as possible for them. Here comes the relation of married life. The normal relations between the husband and the wife were determined by the principle that there would be an absolute identity in their aesthetic, material and moral interests. The principal was recognised in the Vedic age, and is approved by later Dharmasastra writers.

The principle of absolute identity of the interests of the couple followed as a natural corollary from the recognition of the fact that the husband and the wife are the complements of each other. Wife is the keystone of the arch of husband's happiness. The house may be full of sons, daughters, grandsons and granddaughters etc. but it is quite empty if his wife is not there to supervise over it.

The husband treats his wife as the dearest friend. The wife prefers to be the queen of a limited household.[79] She is socially significant. She is the spirit of love. It is she who makes the home peaceful. If

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78. পিতা—মা তর বিহার লাগ্যা পইর‍্যাছি দায়ে
অমন শিকাতে ধিক, অত অধিক বেচে যেন শালিক টিয়ে
কন্যা—সোনার চেন সোনার ঘড়ি, গর্ব যাদের গলায় পরি,
অমন পশু কিনো না বাবা দিয়া টাকাকড়ি।
বিহা কি পদার্থ অপদার্থ বোঝে না ছেলে পেয়ে।
পিতা—মেয়ের বাপ হুয়া মেষ এ পোড়া বাংলাদেশ
নিত্যি খাচ্ছে মাংস কেটে নিয়া দিচ্ছে ক্লেশ
(গম্ভীরা—লোকসঙ্গীত ও উৎসব একাল ও সেকাল, প্রহ্লাদকুমার ঘোষ, কলিকাতা, ১৯৬৮)

79 So she prefers—একলা ঘরে গিন্নী হবো, চাবিকাঠি ঝুলিয়ে নাইতে যাব, which means, I shall be the sole misteress of the house and I would hang the bunch of keys at my side and go to take my bath.

she has peace of mind she guides her family cheerfully. She has found peace in her heart, she has the essence of all beauty, so she can make the home peaceful and beautiful. From this peaceful domestic life she wants to be a mother. As soon as she attains that position she is respected and regarded by all. Her status is the most significant criterion of progress of any society or culture. Motherhood is a spiritual transformation of wifehood. "Within the limited circle of her motherhood, she is the example of self-transcendence through self-enforcement....that enables women even as a wife to function effectively as a citizen, embracing with her mother-heart the millions of its body politic." The child bearing capacity of the women is a thing which is admired by the society. A woman, incapable of it, is socially looked down upon. So she sings,

> Better be mud than a barren woman
> On the mud will grow a tree
> Giving shelter from the sun.

This has found an adequate expression in folksongs.

Every girl has the picture of a man in her dreams. When she is blessed with such a man, her joy knows no bounds. Any absence, however brief, destroys her bit by bit. Of course, as a wife she has certain duties and obligations. "For the first time after several centuries, marriage is becoming a comradeship of equals, a joint adventure in the enrichment of society and enjoyment of its delights. Under the old joint-family, woman as wife hardly got the chance to express herself. The impact of modern world forces has all but broken down that joint family..". And then when a housewife of a folk family has neither the mother-in-law nor the sisters-in-law she says *sasuri nai, nanad nai kare kari dar, age khai pantabhat, sese lepi ghar*,[80] I have neither mother-in-law, nor sister-in-law, whom should I care for; I will take stale rice first and then I will plaster the house with cow-dung and water.

Even though there may be co-wife which cause rivalry and conflicts among the wives. In the traditional Hindu society the husband had the privilege of superseding his wife or taking a second wife. The wife's misfortune was all the greater because she was economically dependent on her husband, but the law did not permit divorce.

Modern scientific thought has clearly shown that there is nothing inherent in the fact of sex which denies woman any priviliege.

80. শাশুড়ী নেই ননদ নেই কারে করি ডর, আগে খাই পান্তাভাত, শেষে লেপি ঘর।

Inferiority of woman is socially imposed, and cannot be explained on rational or psychological grounds.

It is woman who sets the standard of living by deciding what food the family would eat, what clothes she will select for herself and for the members of her family, and how she will set up and run her home. She guides her family, trains her children, by gentle persuasion influences her husband. Experience has shown that women respond to changes quickly. To them, education does not mean just literacy; it also includes hygiene, childcare, domestic science, nutrition and cultural values. The traditional idea that woman's place is in the home is deep-rooted but it is falsely assumed that the woman engaged in profession or taking part in public life is a poor mother and wife. They have a very great adjustment power. But that does not mean a woman is ready to tolerate a co-wife. The modern woman is no longer prepared to accept a social code which recognizes a co-wife or the dominance of male as binding on her. She says *bhatar jamke dite pari tabu satinke dete parina,*[81] the husband can be suffered to die but not to be given over to the co-wife or *ashath kete basat kari, satin kete alta pari,*[82] let me cut down an Asvatha (the religious fig) tree and build my residence there; let me kill my co-wife and paint my feet with her gore.

Recent changes in social structure may be discussed under the following heads: (a) caste in modern India (b) changing rural and urban life and (c) changes in the position of women. In this study we have discussed more or less elaborately the last one as that is available in folklore. While doing so, we have also touched the other two in restricted manner for obvious reason.

It is a popular say that urbanization, industrialization and especially westernization have secured for Indian women an increased measure of freedom. This may be true for women of the upper class but not necessarily for the women of the poor class or folk women. For instance, women of lower class have the right, given to them by custom, to marry again if widowed. Divorce is permitted by custom, still then it is not universally appreciated and it is a falsehood to say that these rights came to Indian women owing to western influence. (*To be concluded in the next issue*)

81. ভাতার বরকে দিতে পারি তবু সতীনকে দিতে পারি না। and পদ্মফুলে তোমরা তোলে খোঁপায় তোলে বর। নাতনী লো তোর খোঁপা দেখে সতীন জ্বর জ্বর। 'সতীনে খোঁপা'-র এই থেকে উৎপত্তি।

82. অশথ কেটে বসত করি, সতীন কেটে আলতা পড়ি।

M. SURYANARAYANAN

A NOTE ON A FEW FOLK-TALES OF SAORAS

AN attempt is made in this article to analyse a few folk tales of Saoras. The present work is confined to the Saoras of Srikakulam District in Andhra Pradesh.

1. KINA REMANGNA KATHA (Tiger and Cat Tale)

LONG ago, a tiger made friendship with a cat. One day the tiger killed a pig and asked the cat to bring fire from the village near by, to fry the pig. The cat went to the village and filled her stomach by stealing away the food stored by the families in the village and forgot about her work and finally slept in the village. The tiger waited and waited thinking that something might have happened to the cat. It became dark. Ants who came to eat the flesh observed the tiger and after having come to know about the position, advised the tiger, "You give up the idea of eating the animal after roasting. Keep the catch in a bush for two or three days and eat, it tastes good. Nobody will come to share with you if you keep like this." The tiger was very much pleased with these words and also informed the same to the other tigers. The ant also told the male tigers to eat the catch from the anus side and the female tigers to eat the catch from the mouth side. Hence, whenever we see a dead and half-eaten animal we can distinguish from it whether it was killed by a male or a female tiger.

2. UDA GUR NA KATHA (Mango Fruit Tale)

There used to live in a Saora village a Saora couple. The other people used to bring good mangoes from the forest but these people being lazy were not used to go for mangoes. At last the wife felt the need for mangoes and asked her husband to bring mangoes as there was nothing to cook in the house that day. He went alone to the forest to a sweet mango tree. While he was collecting mangoes a tiger and a bear came to the tree from opposite directions to eat the mangoes. He immediately got up the tree. The bear also got up the tree and was reaching the same branch where he was hiding. He cleverly holding

another branch, with his hands, kicked the approaching bear suddenly. She fell down on the tiger on the ground. They started fighting and finally went away from the place. Later many persons from his village came there to gather the fruits. He then got down from the tree and explained to them what had happened. They told him never to go to the forest unequipped and alone, especially to a sweet mango tree as bears are more fond of them.

3. BANGSALE DIMAMNABA (Sleep Properly)

To watch their Podu fields, four Saoras went and slept there at a watching house. One of them began snoring while he was sleeping. Hearing the sound, a tiger came and approached the person; when he was snoring, it used to reach him, and when he stopped it used to go away. It used to come daily. One of the other persons observed it and on one day he prepared a trap and tied one end of the rope of the trap to his foot and slept. The tiger, as usual, came and fell in the trap. In the process of escaping from the trap, it rolled this side and that side and the person who tied one end of the trap rope to his foot began rolling accordingly. Ultimately they both rolled from the hill into the valley. Both the tiger and the person died. Hence, while sleeping, if anybody was snoring, the others would say "BANGSALE DIMAMNABA" (sleep properly) and if the person sleeps by turning towards other direction, he will stop snoring according to their belief.

4. BAGU BADI MARANGI NA KATHA (A tale of two friends)

There lived two close friends in a Saora village. Wherever they went, whenever they worked, whenever they ate—everything they used to do jointly and together. Suddenly one of them died. The other person could not recover from the shock soon. He always used to think of his friend. One day, while he was passing through the burial ground to tend his cattle, where his friend was cremated, he suddenly heard the voice of his friend calling him by the name. He appeared before him in the form of a ghost. They spoke together. While separating, his dead friend told him not to see his back side. But this person purposefully saw him thinking that he was hiding something and reached his village. Soon after he reached home, he got a severe fever. His parents asked him the reason. He narrated what had happened. They brought a Kudanmar (Shaman). The Kudanmar with his spiritual power discovered the face of the ghost with a pot. So it could not see. By seeing this all the other ghosts frightened and they never used to come in a physical form since then.

5. KULLOJAN NA KATHA (Tales of Jackal)

A. In one village Saoras sacrified a cow to a god and sold the skin to a Pidi. He took the skin to his house but the next morning he could not find the skin. A jackal came and ate away the skin. The Saoras asked the Pidi to give their money for the skin. He told them that the skin was eaten away by some animal and after finding out the fact he said that he would pay them. He asked the Labobojan (the goddess of earth) about the skin. The Labobojan told that a jackal had eaten it and told him where she was. He went there and the jakal started running fast. He saw her near a redgram field. There were a few persons working. He shouted at them to hold the jackal. She entered the field. The persons could catch hold of her somhow. During the process of hurriedly coming out from the field a branch of the red-gram plant struck at her one eye and she had become blind. The Pidi came there and asked the jackal about the skin. The jackal very cleverly asked him whether his skin was eaten away by a good jackal or a blind jackal. He replied that it was eaten by a good jackal. Then she replied that it was not herself, as she was blind of one eye. So the Pidi left her.

B. One person had given his bullock on lease to another person After the expiry of the period the owner of the bullock went to the other person's house to whom he had given his bullock on lease. He returned his bullock. The owner of the bullock asked him as to what happened to its calf. The other person replied in surprise that how could a bullock give birth to a calf. A dispute arose between them on that matter. A jackel was passing through by that time. They told her what had happened and sought her verdict. The jackal told them that she could give her verict, provided they gave her a few eggs to eat. So they gave her a few eggs. She ate all of them and told them to make all the villagers assemble at the Gamong's (Head-man's) house. As required, all persons assembled there. She went there and told all persons that she had seen the sea burning while she was coming from that side. All the people assembled there laughed and expressed their doubts whether it could be possible. Then she cleverly told them that if a bullock was capable of reproducing, then it would also be possible for the sea to burn. They understood the logic and ultimately over-ruled the person's claim for a calf and taught him alesson.

C. Once a jackal went to a stream. A crocodile caught hold of her leg. The jackal told that she caught a root instead of her leg. The

crocodile left the leg thinking that it was a root. So the jackal escaped. The crocodile observed the jackal coming daily to eat Kurgat fruits (Schizizum jambolanam fruits). She crawled to the tree and covered herself with leaves. As usual the jackal came to eat the fruits. The crocodile caught her leg. The jackal thought that it was nothing but crocodile and cleverly spoke out "O Kurgat, O Kurgat" and added saying to herself "what surely the Kurgat used to reply, to day it is not replying". The crocodile heard these words and replied "Yes, Yes". In that process she left the leg of the jackal and it escaped. The crocodile was disappointed very much and firmly determined to take revenge against the jackal. So she searched and found the jackal's house. When the jackal was out of the house she entered the house to catch hold of jackal as soon as it entered. After sometime the jackal while entering her house found the foot prints of the crocodile. She very calmly went to a nearby cattle keepers who were tending cattle, to help her to kill the crocodile. The jackal told them to kill the crocodile and fry it on fire and told that she would look after the cattle. She drove the cattle to the Ragi fields and by the time the crocodile was fried and made ready to eat, then she cried that the cattle were eating away the Ragi fields. Those people at once left the fried crocodile there and ran to drive the cattle from the field. The jackal came to the spot and ate as much meat of the crocodile as she could eat and ran away by the time they returned.

Discussion :

The first tale KINA REMANGA KATHA, the second one UDA GUR NA KATHA, and the third BANGSALE DIMAMNABA reaveal Saoras close association with forest and forest animals. Some of the tales have a moral value. Children can learn much from the tales which are useful in their future. The fourth tale BAGU BADI MARANGI NA KATHA though does not find any significant value, tells about their concept about ghost. The tiger and the cat making friendship is found among the plains stories but here in the first tale it was explained differently. Under fifth, THREE JACKAL TALES were narrated. The jackal was find here as a clever and cunning and is also seen depicted as clever and cunning among plains stories. In the first jackal tale (A) the jackal is depicted as a very clever animal. The second jackal tale (B) tells that greed is bad. In the third jackal story (C) we find crocodile which is very rare to find in Saora country. This clearly indicates that the idea of crocodile is foreign to them, which might have entered the Saora folk tales by culture contact.

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Compiled by SHALIGRAM GUPTA

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BOOK-REVIEW

DIALECT, PROVERBS, AND WORD-LORE, Editor, Gomme, George Laurence, Volume II of *The Gentleman's Magazine Library*. London, Elliot Stock, 1886. x+352 pages. Reissued by Singing Tree Press, a division of Gale Research Company, Detroit, Michigan, 1968. L.C. ||68-23900. $ 12.00.

The book under review is volume no 2 of Singing Tree Press's 13 volume set of folklore series. Each volume is devoted to one subject and classified and presents the contributors to the *Gentleman's Magazine* (1731-1868). The pioneering English Dialect Society examined volume upon volume of *The Gentlemen's Magazine* when perparing its contribution on dialect to *A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles* and for good reason. The famous old journal was the repository of scores of original observations on provincial speech by intelligent travelers and as many analyses by scholars of word origins and the histories of proverbs.

As part of *The Gentleman's Magazine Library*, the volume's chief merit, in the view of its editor, was that it consisted in ". . .local knowledge and information which is so abundantly shown throughout its pages, and which is now so rapidly becoming impossible for the modern student to attain." The mass of selected and annotated material is divided into several sections, such as,

—Lists of local words and dialect specimens (Northumberland, Lancashire, Zetland, Exmoor, et al.) ;

—Proverbs (Anglo-Saxon, weather, local, Northern, seasons, etc.) ;

—Special words (archaic, compound, nominal. . .plus groups, such as words and expressions for drunkeness) ;

—Names of persons and places ;

—Signs of inns.

Besides reprints, certain editorial additions are incerted. A few signed by "Hinyboro" originally printed in 1818-19 have curtailed because the authors wandered off into dissertations, took up too much space for their real value. This is a well-come series for which Singing Tree Press deserves congratulation from everybody interested in the subject.

C. R. Sen

LAUKIK SAVDAKOSH by Sri Kamini Kumar Ray, with an Introduction by Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji. Indian Publications, 3, British Indian Street, Calcutta-1, Folklore Series No. 13, 1868 ; pp. 248 ; Rs. 12.50.

The book under review contains much useful information on Bengali culture, particularly folk-culture, presented in the form of a Dictionary in Bengali. The words have been alphabetically arranged

under seven categories, viz. house and home, domestic articles, agriculture, flora, fauna, rites and customs, and kinship terms and personal names. Some of these sections have been further divided into a number of sub-sections. For example, the words under the category of 'agriculture' have been classified under the following sub-sections: words denoting different types of agricultural personnel, words denoting agricultural implements, words denoting different kinds of soil and field, words denoting the entire process of cultivation (preparation of field, sowing, havesting, etc.). The lexical items have been neatly described. The synonyms of the words found in the different dialects of Bengali, and at times also homonyms, have been given in it as far as has been possible. The dialects in which the synonyms and homonyms occur have also been indicated. The culture-words that are more important have been copiously discussed with the help of sub-items related to the principal word (e.g. the different parts and varieties of an article, and so on). The data used in the book have been collected from published material and the author's field-notes. The book contains two Prefaces, one written by Dr. Sunity Kumar Chatterji, and the other by the author of the book. Both the Prefaces are replete with background informations.

This is in short the scheme of the work. In all likehood every reader of the book will be highly impressed with the sustained work of Mr. Ray, and also benefit by his researches. The multi-purpose approach of the author has made the book somewhat cumbersome, for he has tried to make the book a study of Bengali dialects, of Bengali folklore, material culture and many other things. It has become so perhaps for the reason that Mr. Ray devoted the best part of his mtaure academic pursuits to this study and acquired a large mass of material all of which he wished to compress within the short span of this book. But the major portion of the book has been devoted to the study of Bengali culture and folklore, and we have no doubt that this aspect of the book will evoke admiration from every reader, whether he is a specialist or not. The author has provided a stable and useful base for further research work.

Sudhibhushan Bhattacharya

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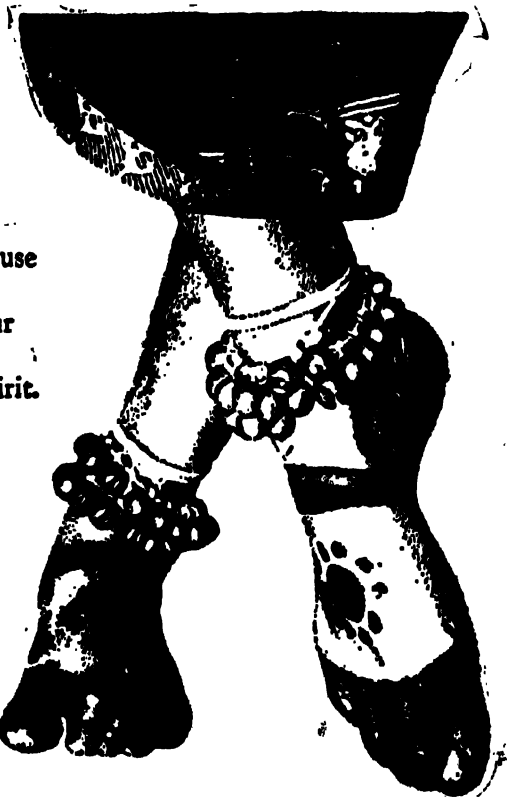
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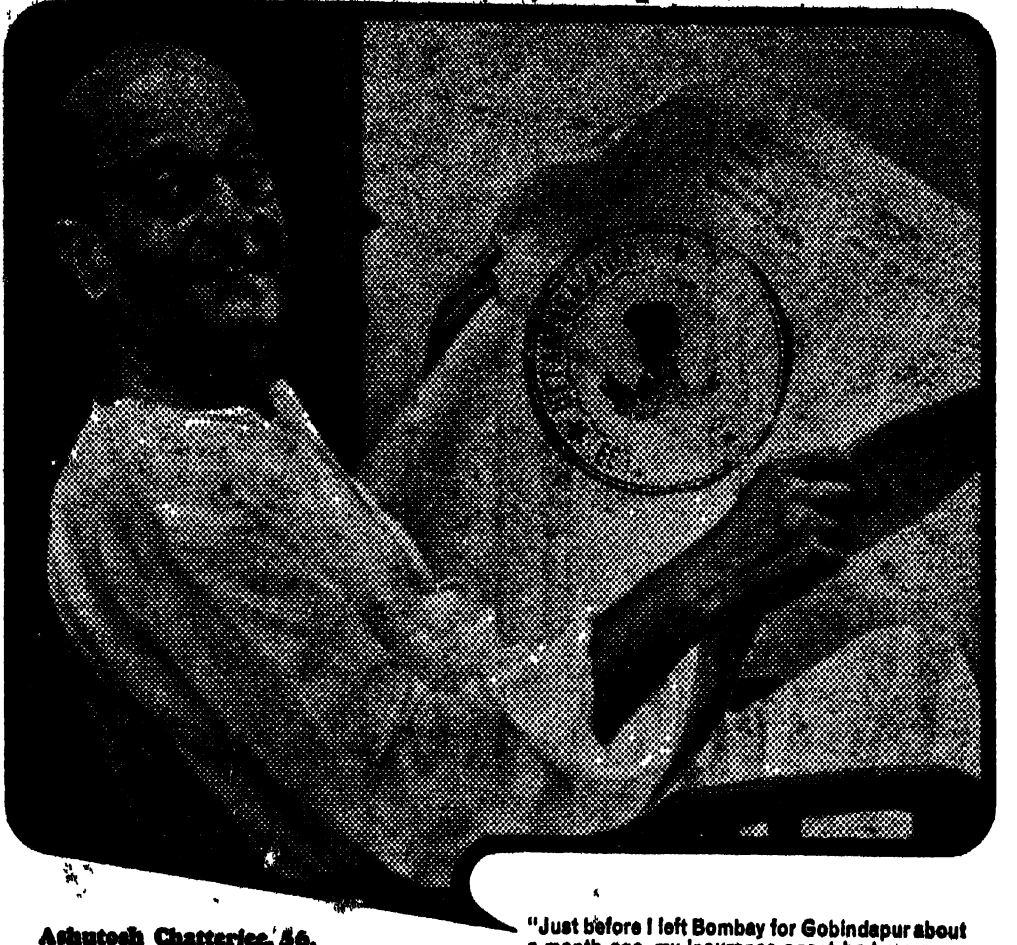
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SANTIBHAI ACHARYA

A BHILI TALE : TOM TOM TOM

THERE was a Mongoose. It was walking along a hedge. Meantime, it pricked with a thorn. Then the Mongoose went to a barber and said "O, brother barber, O, brother barber," "What do you want?" the barber replied. "I have been pricked with a thorn, (kindly) get it out" the Mongoose requested. "Oh yes, I will just get it out" replied the barber. Then the barber drew the thorn out pulling from his foot and threw it out. Afterwards the Mongoose said "O, brother barber, give me the thorn back. The barber replied that the thorn was lost. On hearing this the Mongoose said "give me my thorn back otherwise I would flee taking your razor" (saying so he fled with barber's razor).

When the Mongoose was going further with the razor, (he saw that) carpenters were designing—Cavru,—a part of wooden plough which enters into the soil—by their teeth. On seeing this the Mongoose asked (to them) "Why you are fashioning (this) Cavru by teeth? the carpenters. And they took up the razor. While working it has broken. The Mongoose said"give me my razor." "Your razor has been broken" replied the carpenters. The Mongoose said again "give (me my) razor or I would go away your Cavru with me. (And he went carrying that Cavru). When he walked further he saw that an old woman was roasting breads burning her hands and feet. Seeing this the Mongoose said "O, old woman, why do you roast breads burning your hands and feet? (Please) look at my heavy Cavru." "Let me burn it" the old woman said. Saying so she took the Cavru and burnt it. Then the Mongoose said "give me my Cavru (bock)." "It is (already) burnt" the old woman replied. The Mongoose said again "give my Cavru back otherwise I would run away carrying your breads.' And he fled with breads

On his way again the Mongoose saw that a potter was eating Gar, while prepairing a mixture of earth, water, etc., for making earthen pots Gar. The Mongoose said to him. "O, potter, why you are eating Gar while fashioning pots?" Look at my fresh bread." and tast it.

The potter said "let me eat it." And the potter ate the whole bread. Then the Mongoose said to the potter "give my bread back otherwise I would run away taking your earthen pot" and did so.

When he was walking further carrying that pot, he found that cowherds were preparing and eating Khir,—a milk dish—in a pot made of leaves of tree akerjjo (calotropis gigantea) sewn togather. The Mongoose said to them "O, cowherds, why do you prepare and eat Khir in a pot made of leaves of the tree akarjjo? Just see my beautiful earthen pot." The cowherds replied "let us cook Khir in it" and took the pot. Then they said to him "Mongoose, you please collect our cattle (which are grazing scattered) riding on a male buffalo". Thus Mongoose was driven out for collecting cattle. When the Mongoose disappeared the cowherds prepared Khir in the pot and eating hurridely they thrown out the pot breaking into pieces. The Mongoose returned shortly and said to the cowherds "give me my pot back". "Somebody has broken your pot" the cowherds replied. The Mongoose said again "give me my pot back otherwise I would run away taking this male buffalo" (and he fled taking that male buffalo).

When he was going further with that male buffalo, he saw that a marriage party was passing—(looked like) hungry and thursty. The Mongoose approached the party and said "O men of marriage party, why do you go hungry? Just see my flashy male buffalo. Would you like to eat it?" The party took the buffalo, killed it and ate-up.

When they finished the whole stuff the Mongoose came back and said to them "give my male buffalo back otherwise I would run away taking your bride". Saying so the Mongoose ran away taking the bride. While he was proceeding further taking the bride with him, he found another marriage party passing but a bride. The Mongoose approached and said to that party "Why you are returning without a bride? See, I have a beautiful bride with me". The party took up the bride and went away. Then the Mongoose said "give my bride back to me otherwise I would go away your drum," saying so it took the drum scrips this hill to that hill singing.

A Mongosse was passing along a hedge, had a thron pricked;
giving up that thron he took a razor tom tom tom
giving razor he took a cavru tom tom tom
giving cavru he took a bread tom tom tom
giving bread he took an earthenpot tom tom tom.
giving earthen pot he took a male buffalo tom tom tom
giving male buffaloo he took a bride tom tom tom
giving bride he took a drum tom tom tom
Then? This hill to that hill tom tom tom tom.

Tribal Research Institute, Gujarat, Ahmedabad.

PURNIMA SINHA

FOLK CLASSICAL CONTINUUM IN INDIAN MUSIC

(Continued from October issue)

II. KARAM SONGS

Now we pass on to *Karam* songs catered to a multi-ethnic and larger audience. These songs represent a phase of cultural development in the region later to that represented by the tribal *Sarhul* songs. There are two distinct types of Karam Songs with distinct types of tunes. The following tune is sung by a group of people who are comparatively recent settlers in the area who came from the West i.e., Bihar region.

Specimen No. 5

Word theme:

Gara dhora gara dhora
Dumuri pakia gel
Oh ho re jamu re baide
Jamu baide gaya re gothai

Translation:

In the broken uplands,
The figs are already ripe,
O, there, there in the low *jamu* land,
The cattles have gathered together!

Notation:

The song is complete in 4 lines divided in groups of 6 beats divided as 2/2/2/2/

1.	C	D	D	F	F	—	E	E	E	D	D	S
	S	R	R	M	M	—	Ga	Ga	Ga	R	R	C
	Ga	ra	dho	.	ra	.	ga	ra	dho	.	ra	.
2.	C	D	D	—	E	D	C	D	C	—	—	—
	S	R	R	—	Ga	R	S	R	S	—	—	—
	Du	mu	ri	.	pa	.	ki	a	ge	.	.	1
3.	F	—	E	—	D	—	C	D	D	—	E	D	G	D	C	—	—
	M	—	Ga	—	R	—	S♭	R		—	Ga	R	S	R	S	—	—
	Oh	.	ho	.	re	.	ja	.	mu	.	re	.	ba	i	de	.	.
4.	C	D	D	F	F	—	E	E	D	E	D	—	C	—	—	—	—
	S	R	R	M	M	—	Ga	Ga	R	Ga	R	—	S	—	—	—	—
	ja	mu	ba	i	de	.	gay	a	re	.	go	.	tha	.	.	.	i

Distribution of the notes in the different lines:

TABLE 7
N.V

note→ line. ↓	S	R	G	M		S+G	R+M	
1.	2	4	3	3	12	5	7	
2.	6	5	1	0	12	7	5	
3.	6	7	3	2	18	6	7	in 12 beats
4.	4	5	3	3	18	7	5	
Total	21	21	10	8	60			

Gaar dhore
TABLE 8

N.V	C.V.N	C.L.V.	V.U.	C.V.U.		C.V Mifhuna—Matrika	
S — 21	S R		SGP—31 RMD—29	SGP DSG	50%	DSG-SGP	SGPD 50%
R — 21	G		nRM—29	RMD MDS		RMD-MDS	SRMD —83%
G — 10	M		MDS—29 DSG—31	nRM			
M — 8		60x.4 =24					
Total 60				Scale—SRGM (P) (D) (n)			

From table 7 we again find that combinations related by anubad SG and RM has a correspondence with rhyming of the word theme.

In this song we find that the combined value of R and M is 29 which exceeds C.L.V. (Table 8). Therefore D and n are virtually present and the presence of the *Khandamerus* RMD and nRM are assumed. SGPD is again the dominant Matrika which has a value 50% of the total value. But the second *Matrika* SRMD has a value 83% of the total value which is much greater than that of the dominant Matrika. But the value of the individual notes of the *Matrika* could not raise the value of the component *Khandamerus* RMD or MDS to the position of the dominant *Khandameru*. We shall regard SGPD as the dominant *Matrika*

paying due weightage to the predominance of the *Khandamerus* DSG and SGP. The *Mithuna* nRM-RMD has an equal claim to from the 2nd *Matrika* RMDn, but it has a value 48% of the total value, which is less than that of SRMD. The value of a subdominant *Matrika* may in some cases be a little greater than the value of the dominant *Matrika* even in cases of Kheyal themes (Sanyal 1959 : 54, 117). But the large difference in value observed in sample 5 would probably be infrequent in Kheyal themes. Since the songs under consideration are very primitive and have not developed systematically, they may not fit perfectly with a standard model set up on the basis of analysis of samples belonging to systematised music. A confusion in classification is created due to reversal of value between the 1st and the 2nd *Matrika*. In this song 'n' appears as an extra latent note thus the scale becomes SRGM (P) (D) (n) with 4 manifest and three latent or virtual notes.

As it is, the *Khandamerus* DSG and SGP definitely occupy the dominant position. But we notice that if one 'G' is replaced by a 'M' all the *Khandamerus* would have crowded together in the same position and it would have been impossible to come to a decision regarding the predominance between the *Matrikas* (a) SGPD, (b) SRMD, (c6 RMPn. The song avoids such a confusion by an equisite balance. Still we shall assume that exchanging one 'G' and 'M' would not have caused much change in the nature of the song and thus classify the song as a border line sample where a strong decision about emphasis has not been attained. This, of course does not affect the emotional appeal of the song. In this song the strength of R+M indicates the virtual presence of 'n'. This the scale is extended in comparison to the previous songs. and becomes SRGM (P) (D)n. This scale has the possibility of developing the Ragas of the *Khambaj* Group.

An alternative may also be suggested in assigning the dominant *Matrika* of specimen 5. Since the latent note 'D' completes the Khandamerus (D) SG and M (D) S, and RM (D), satisfying the demand of the pairs SG, MS, and RM appearing explicitly in the song to complete the required triplets, we may exclude the note 'P' from the list of latent notes. In that case the sequence of the *Matrikas* will be (1) SGMD 2) SRMD. This combination appears in a *raga* name *Behari* (Sanyal 1959 : 168). The tune also resembles a common motif prevalant in Bihar.

The following type of song is the earlier and more prevalent form of Karam Songs.

Specimen No. 6

Word theme :

Kurchi Phul, Kurchi Phul
Phute agey ag lo
Biti chhayer durey biha
Khanchhey ontor
Bap kande hate batey
Ma kande Ghate lo
Sokoli songotee kande
Dhulate lutaye.

Baper ghor ucho ucho
Sosur ghor nicha lo
Kia dekhi bape biha dil
Tori kopal biti
Hameri nojor lo
Jamai dekhe
Hame biha dil.

Translation :

Kurchi flowers bloom
All the way ahead
Our daughter is married to a distant land
My heart is weeping
The father is crying in the market place
The mother is crying at the Ghat
All the playmates are weeping
lying in the dust.

My father's home is high
My father-in-law's home is low
Why did my father marry me here ?
It is your fate oh daughter
And my eyes deceived me
I was charmed by the bridegroom.

Notation :

1	G	—	G	—	F	—	G	—	G	—	F	—		
	P	—	P	—	M	—	P	—	P	—	M	—		
	Kur	.	chi	.	Phu	1	Ku	r	chi	.	phu	1	.	

2	F	G	—	F	G	—	F	—	F	E	—	—
	M	P	—	M	P	—	M	—	M	Ga	—	—
	Phu	te	.	a	gey	—	a	.	g	lo	.	.
3	C	C	—	D	E	—	C	C	—	E	E	—
	S	S	—	R	Ga	—	S	S	—	Ga	Ga	—
	Bi	ti	.	chha	ye	r	du	re	.	bi	.	.
4	F	—	—	G	G	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
	M	—	—	P	P	—	M	—	—	—	—	—
	Ka	.	n	chhe	on	.	to	.	.	.	.	r
5	G	—	G	G	G	—	A	B♭	—	A	G	—
	P	—	P	P	P	—	Da	n	—	Da	P	—
	Ba	.	P	Kan	de	.	ha	tey	.	ba	tey	.
6	F	—	—	G	G	—	F	F	—	E	—	—
	M	—	—	Pa	Pa	—	M	M	—	Ga	—	—
	Ma	.	.	Kan	de	.	gha	tey	.	lo	,	.
7	C	C	—	D	E	—	C	C	—	E	E	—
	S	S	—	R	Ga	—	S	S	—	Ca	Ga	—
	So	ko	—	li	so	ng	o	ti	.	kan	de	.
8	F	F	—	G	G	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
	M	M	—	P	P	—	M	—	—	—	—	—
	Dhu	la	.	te	lu	.	ta	.	.	.	.	ye

TABLE 9

	N.V.													
Note→ line ↓	S	R	G	M	P	D	n	Total	SGP	MDS	RMD	nRM	PnR	DSG
1	0	0	0	4	8	0	0	12	8	4	4	4	8	0
2	0	0	3	5	4	0	0	12	7	5	5	5	4	0
3	6	1	5	0	0	0	0	12	11	6	1	1	0	11
4	0	0	0	9	3	0	0	12	3	9	9	9	3	3
5	0	0	0	0	8	2	2	12	8	2	2	2	10	2
6	0	0	3	6	3	0	0♭	12	6	6	6	2	3	2
7	6	1	5	0	0	0	0	12	11	6	1	1	0	11
8	0	0	0	9	3	0	0	12	3	9	2	9	3	3
Total	12	2	16	33	29	2	2	96	57	47	37	36	33	30

TABLE 10

Kurchi Phul

N.V.	C.V.N.	V.K.	C.V.K.	Mithuna	C.V Matrika
S—12	M	SGP—57	SGP 60%	(DSG-SGP)	SGPD —61%
R— 2	P	RMD —37	MDS 49%	(RMD MDS)	SRMD 51%
G—16	G	MDS—47	RMD	(Pnr-nRM)	RMPn 68%
M—33	S	PnR—33	nRM		
P—29		DSG—30	PnR		
D— 2		nRM—37	DSG		
n— 2					
Total 96				Scale : SRGMPDn	

The notes 'P' 'D' and 'n' assumed to be virtually present in the previous songs appear explicitly in this song, stabilising the scale SRGMPDn, which has the possibility of developing Ragas of Khambaj group. The order of the *Khandamerus* are distinctly defined. The order of the *Matrikas* are also definite, SGPD being the dominant *Matrika*. But in this case too, the Matrika RMPn, which comes third in position has a slightly higher value than that of the dominant Matrika, in terms of the sum of the value of the individual notes R,M,P and n. There is an interesting correlation between the high strength of RMPn, which is known to be the dominant *Matrika* of *Megha Raga* (*Raga* of clouds) (Sanyal 1959 : 99) and the fact that the song is sung during the rainy season. But the coincidence may be accidental.

If we arrange the note values and value of the *Khandamerus*, starting from the dominant to the lowest one in each of the successive lines of the word theme (Table 6), we again notice that the value of the *Khandamerus* as well as the individual notes are rhyming liks words in a poem. From this pattern it seems that the *Khandamerus* inherent in the melodic theme may be compared with words in a poem. We notice that words in language are constructed from letters chosem arbitrarily from an almost unlimited source of sound and thus may have a wide range of combinations which may be utilised in rhyming in a poem. But in case of music, only twelve notes related by their frequency ratio with the tonic can be used to form musical words. Within these twelve notes again, the words are constructed under a rigid selection principle using the restricted set of notes related by *Sambad* and *Anubad*. It may

seem that variety in rhyming is limited in music. But actually, the limited set of *Khandamerus* inherent in a melodic theme may have a large number of distribution of duration in different sections of the theme. The same *Khandameru* with different duration acts as separate rhyming words, which can be arranged in successive lines of the theme to create the musical poem. Thus the musical words have two component : i) the notes comprising the *Khandameru*, ii) the duration of the notes. A different word is generated if either of the components is changed. Table 6 actually shows the symmetrical variation of duration of each *Khandameru* along the successive lines.

III. DANR SAILA

The following song represents the single type of tune used in the songs of the form *Danr Saila*.

Specimen No. 7

Word theme :

Andharey Jyochhnaye
Andhar korey disna
Ami lo tor chokher kajol
Joley dunye disna.

Translation :

There is darkness and Moonlight
Don't make it all dark
I am the mascara of your eye
Don't wash it away.

1	*	*	F	F	F	—	G	—	—	G	—	—
	*	*	M	M	M	—	P	—	—	P	—	—
			An	dha	rey	.	joy	.	chh	na	ye	.
2	G	A	—	B^b	A	—	G	—	—	F	E	—
	P	Da	—	n	Da	—	P	—	—	M	Ga	—
	An	dha	r	ko	rey	.	dis	.	.	na	.	.
3	F	F	—	F	F	—	E	E	—	D	C	—
	M	M	—	M	M	—	Ga	Ga	—	R	S	—
	a	mi	—	lo	tor	.	cho	kher	.	ka	jo	l
4	D	E	—	E	D	—	C	C	—	C	C	—
	R	Ga	—	Ga	R	—	S	S	—	S	S	—
	Jo	ley	.	dhun	ye	.	dis	.	.	na	.	.

TABLE 11

N.V.	C. N. V.	V. K.	C. V. K.	C. V. Mithuna		C. V. Matrika	
S — 8	M	SGP— 26	SGP— 57%	(1) (DSG— SGP)		SGPD	65%
R— 4	P	RMD—19	MDS—50%	(2) (RMD—MDS)		SRMD	59%
G— 8	S	MDS— 23	DSG	(3) (PnR— nRM)		RMPn	57%
M—11	G	PnR— 15	RMD				
P —10	D	DSG— 20	nRM				
D— 4	n	nRM— 16	PnR				
n— 1							
Total 46			Scale : S R G M P D n				

The scale and the dominant Matrika is the same as in the previous specimen. In this song there is no discrepancy between the position and value of the *Matrikas*. The value gradually diminish from the dominant to the subsequent *Matrikas*. But the difference between the values of the *Khandamerus* SGP and MDS is only three. An adjustment of three notes between MD and GP would shift the sequence of Matrikas to e) SGMD, f) RMDN. (Thus this specimen would also be regarded as a border line case with a possibilty of developing the set of *Matrikas* { e, f } . There seems to be some hesitation in decision about emphasis between SGPD and SGMD. The scale notes are SRGMPDn.

IV. TUSU

There are two and only two distinct types of tunes sung in Tusu festival with different kinds of word themes. One sample of each type of songs are given below :

Specimen No. 8

Word theme :

Asanboni Asanboni go
Chaler boro dor suni
Kalimatir istisaney
Kasipurer Nilmoni
Rele disna matha
Tor ma kanchhey lo bachha bachha
Rele disna matha.

Translation :

At the village Asaboni
The rice has become very dear
At Kalimati railway station,
O Nilmoni of Kasipur,
Don't place your head on the railroad
Your mother is crying, "O my child!
Don't place your head on the railroad."

Notation :

1	*	*	E	E	F	G	E	F	E	D	C	—
	*	*	Ga	Ga	M	P	Ga	M	Ga	R	S	—
			A	san	bo	ni	a	san	bo	ni	go	.
2	C	C	D	E	F	G	G	F	F	—	—	—
	S	S	R	Ga	M	P	P	M	M	—	—	—
	cha	ler	bo	ro	do	r	su	ni	.	.	.	.
3	E	E	F	F	F	G	E	F	E	D	C	—
	Ga	Ga	M	M	M	P	Ga	M	Ga	R	S	—
	Ka	li	.	ma	ti	r	i	s	ti	sa	ney	.
4	E	F	F	F	C	C	D	E^b	D	C	B^b	A
	Ga	M	M	Ga	S	S	R	g	R	S	n	Da
	Ka	.	si	pu	.	rer	Ni	l	mo	ni	re	le
5	G	—	A	B^b	C	—	—	—	—	—	E	E
	P	—	Da	n	S	—	—	—	—	—	Ga	Ga
	di	s	na	ma	tha	.	.	.	.	.	tor	ma
6	E	F	F	E	D	S	D	E^b	D	C	B^b	A
	Ga	M	M	Ga	R	S	R	g	R	S	n	D
	Ka	n	chh	lo	.	ba	chae	.	ba	chha	re	le
7	G	—	A	B^b	C	—						
	P	—	Da	n	S	—						
	di	s	na	ma	tha	.						

Asan boni

TABLE 12

N.V	C N V	V.K	C.V.K	C.V Mithuna Matrika
S—18	S	SgP—28	SGP—54%	(1) (DSG-SGP)—SGPD—60%
R— 9	M	SGP—41	MDS—50%	(2) (RMD-MDS)—SRMD—63%
g— 2	G	RMD—29	DSG	(3) (PnR-nRM)—RMPn—42%
G—15		gPn—14	RMD	
				(4) (SgP-gPn)—SgPn—42%
M—16		MDS—38	nRM	
P— 8		DSG—37		
D— 4		PnR—21		
n— 4		nRM—29		
Total 76				Scale S R g G M P D n

In this sample the priority of the *Khandamerus* and the *Matrikas* are distinctly defined. The sequence of the first three *Matrikas* are similar to that in the three other specimens described before. But the second *Matrika* SRMD has a value slightly greater than that of the dominant Matrika. An additional note 'g' apprears with a small value and contributes in forming the *Khandameru* SgP in the the sixth position among eight *Khandamerus*. The appearence of 'g' is not unlikely, as the mediant combination Pn appearing in the previous samples, may tend to complete the *Khandameru* gPn. An additional *Matrika* SgPn appears in the fourth position. The notes used in the scale are SRGMPDn. (The notes have the possibility of generating the *Ragas* of the group represented by both *Khambaj* and *Sindhu*, due to the presence of 'g'. But since the position of SgPn is too low compared to the other *Matrikas* the effect of 'g' is negligible. Thus the possibility of developing Ragas with 'g' in the scale like *Kafi* or *Sindhu* is low. The possibility of developing Khambaj is stronger.

Specimen No. 9

Barey barey barun kori
Baidey tola diona
Baidey tola baide roilo
Mahajoney manena
Hey urakol bajao re bansi
Amra bansi key bhalo basi
Banshi key bhalo basi.

Translation :

I asked you over and over
Not to plant the seedlings in the bed

The seedlings of the low land remained where they were
The Money lender would not listen.
O airplane, blow your horn
We love the horn.

The last two lines are added as refrain, the word theme of which may be completely unrelated with the original theme. The refrains are improvised on the spot at random.

Notation :

1

C	—	D	F	F	—	F	—	F	E	F	—	
S	—	R	M	M	—	M	—	M	Ga	M	—	
Ba	.	re	ba	re	.	ba	.	run	ko	ri	.	

2

G	—	A	G	F	—	F	—	E	D	E^b	D	
P	—	Da	P	M	—	M	—	Ga	R	g	R	
Bai	.	de	to	la	.	di	.	o	na	.	.	

3

C	—	F	F	E^b	—	D	—	C	B^b	A	B^b	
S	—	M	M	g	—	R	—	S	n	Da	n	
Bai	.	de	to	la	.	bai	.	de	roi	lo	.	

4

C	—	D	E	F	G	F	—	E	D	E^b	D	
S	—	R	Ga	M	P	M	—	Ga	R	g	R	
Mo	—	ha	jo	ne	ye	ma	.	ne	na	.	.	

5

C	—	F	F	E^b	D	$\overline{CD}$	C	—	B^b	A	B^b	C	—	—	
S	—	M	M	g	R	$\overline{SR}$	S	—	n	A	n	S	—	—	
Hey	.	u	ra	ko	l	ba	ja	o	re	.	ban	si	.	.	

6

—	E	E	E	E	F	F	—	G	E	E	E	D	E^b	D		
—	Ga	Ga	Ga	Ga	M	M	—	P	Ga	M	Ga	R	g	R		
.	am	ra	Ban	si	·	ke	.	bha	lo	.	ba	si	.	.		

7

C	D	—	E	—	$\overline{FG}$	E	F	E	D	E^b	D	
S	R	—	Ga	—	$\overline{MP}$	Ga	M	Ga	R	g	R	
Ban	si	.	ke	.	bha	lo	.	ba	si	.	.	

Bare Bare

TABLE 13

N.V	C.N.V	V.K	C.V.K	C.V Mithuna	Matrika
S— 16.5	M	SgP—32	MDS 50%	(1) (RMD-MDS)	SRMD 66%
R—15 5	S	SGP—33	nRM 50%	(2) (PnR-nRM)	RMPn 56%
g— 10	R	RMD— 43.	RMD	(3) (DSG-SGP)	SGPD 40%
G—11	G	gPn—19.5	SGP	(4) (SgP-gPn)	SgPn 40%
M—24.5		MDS—44	DSG		
P—5.5		PnR—25.	SgP		
D—3		DSG—30.5	PnR		
n—4		nRM—44	gpn		
Total 90.0				Scale S R g G M P D n	

The same set of notes as the other *Tusu* specimen has been used. The priority of the *Khandamerus* and Matrikas are distinct. But unlike all other specimens described before, the *Khandameru* MDS instead of SGP occupies the first position. The sequence of the Matrikas have changed from the set a) SGPD b) SRMD c) RMPn to b) SRMD c) RMPn a) SGPD.

This is the only other prevalent form of *Tusu* sung in the area. All the songs are sung in the same same way with different word themes. Thus, the direction of the development of the change of emphasis attempted in this form of *Tusu* cannot be followed up by analysing more samples, with variation within the particular combination of *Matrikas*. In this sample the individual value of 'g' is stronger compared to that of the previous samples, but here too, 'g' does not make any major contribution to the position of a *Khanameru* or *Matrika* comprising 'g'. The scale notes are again SRg GMPDn. From only two melody types developed in Tusu form, no conclusion can be derived about the direction in which the melodic pattern tend to move as a result of the experiment with introduction of 'g' in the scale.

V. NACHNI SAILA

Now we shall describe songs of the group termed *Nachni Saila* sung by dancing girls, the most cultured and evolved music of the area. Both the word themes and melodic patterns are more complex in these songs. Also, there are many varieties of tunes.

Specimen No. 10

Word theme :

Swaponey Bidhumukhi
Heri Jadupatia

Palonko uporey Shyam
Raholo sutia
Tutilo ghumeri ghor
Heria jubatia
Ankhilore bhije chhati
Bhijolo chhatia.

Translation :

Bidhumuki saw Jadupati in a dream
She saw Shyam sleeping in her bed
Seeing the young dame, his slumber was broken
And tears trickled down his chest
His chest was all wet.

Notation :

The song is complete in 18 bars containing 6 beates each, divided as 3/3/

1	*	*	A	A	B^b	B^b	C	C	C	C	—	—
	*	*	Da	Da	n	n	S	S	S	S	—	—
	*	*	Swa	po	ney	Bi	dhu	mu	khi	.	.	.
2	*	*	G	G A B^b	A G A	B^b A G	A G P	E F —
	*	*	P	P Da n	Da P Da	n DaP	Da P M	Ga M —
	*	*	He	. ri .	Ja . du	. pa .	ti . a	. . .
3	D	E	F	G	A^b	G	E	E	G	E	D	C
	R	Ga	M	P	d	P	M	Ga	R	Ga	R	S
	Pa	.	lo	n	ko	u	po	re	shya	.	.	m
4	E	E	$\overline{DC}$	C	E	B	D	C	—	E	D	C
	Ga	Ga	$\overline{RS}$	S	Ga	Ga	R	S	—	Ga	R	S
	Ro	.	ho	.	lo	.	su	ti	.	.	.	a
5	*	*	A	A	A	B^b	B^b	C	C	—	—	C
	*	*	Da	Da	Da	n	n	S	S	—	—	S
	*	*	Tu	ti	lo	ghu	me	ri	gho	.	.	r
6	*	*	G	G A B^b	A G A	B^b A G	A G F	E — —
	*	*	P	P Da n	Da P Da	n Da P	Da P M	Ga — —
	*	*	He	. ri .	a . ju	. bo .	ti . a	. . .

7	*	*	F	F	F	F	G	A	G	F	E	C
	*	*	M	M	M	M	P	Da	P	M	G	S
	*	*	An	khi	lo	rey	bhi	je	.	chha	ti	.
8	E	—	C	C	E	—	D	C	C	C	—	—
	Ga	—	S	S	Ga	—	R	S	S	S	—	—
	Bhi	.	jo	.	lo	.	chha	ti	.	a	.	.

Swapone Bidhumukhi

TABLE 14

N. V	C. N. V	V. K	C. V, K	C. V	
				Muthuna	Matrika
S— 27.5	S	SGP—57.5	DSP—60%	(1) (DSG—SGP)	SGPE— 75%
R— 4.5	D	RMD—31.5	SGP—58.5%	(2) (RMD-MDS)	SRMD—60%
G— 16	G	MES—54.5	MDS—55.1%	(3) (PnR—nRM)	RMPn— 39%
M—11	P	PnR—26 5			
P— 16	M	DSG—59.5			
d— 16	n	nRM—23.5	RMD		
D—16	R		PnR		
n— 8			nRM		
Total 98			Scale—S R G M P d D n		

Notation :

There is no discrepancy between the position and the value of the successive *Matrikas*. In this sample too, the sequence of Matrikas are (a) SGPD, (b) SRMD (c) RMPn. But adjustment of three notes between MD and GP would shift the design to the set of combination (e) SGMD (f) RMDn. One beat of 'd' has been introduced in the scale without contributing either to any *Khandameru* or to any *Matrika*. This song also represent a borderline case between the group represented by the set { a, b, c } and { e, f } of the *Matrikas*.

Specimen No. 11

Tui amar soru sinta
Tui golar mala gantha
Tui sadher ayna chiruni lo
Hey dhoni

Tui dhuti jama jora
Tui O paguri tera
Tui kaner pulo hey
Sojoni dhoni

Tui bhalo basa basi
Tui mukher muchki hasi
Tui chokher chonchol chahoni lo
Hey dhoni.

Ami takaye ako anna
Tui takaye solo anna
Mon banka kano chhando badani
Hey dhoni.

Translation

You are the fine parting of my hair
You are the necklace of my neck
You are my favourite mirror and comb
O pretty girl!
You are my dhoti and my shirt
You are my slanting head dress
You are the flower in my ear,
My friend, my pretty girl!
You are love itself,
You are the smile on my face,
You are the restless look in my eyes,
O pretty girl.
I am a quarter in an anna,
You are sixteen annas in a rupee,
Why is your mind turned away,
O my moon faced pretty girl?

Notation

(The same tune is repeated with the word themes of the subsequent stanzas)

1	*	*	A	A	A	B^b	B^b	C	—	C	C	—
	*	*	Da	Da	Da	n	n	S	—	S	S	—
			Tui	a	ma	r	so	ru	.	sin	ta	.
2	F	—	G	—	A	B^b	G	A	G	F	E	—
	M	—	P	—	Da	n				M	Aa	—
	tui	.	go	.	la	r	P	Da	P	gan	tha	.

	E	F	F	—	F	—	G	A	G	F	E	D
	G	M	M	—	M	—	P	Da	P	M	Ga	R
	tu	i	sa	.	dhe	r	a	y	na	.	chi	.
4	C	D	$\overline{CD}$	E	E	—	D	C	C	—	—	—
	S	D	$\overline{SR}$	G	G	—	R	S	S	—	—	—
	ru	.	ni	.	lo	.	hey	dho	.	ni	.	.

Tui Amar Soru Sita

TABLE 15

N. V	C.N.V	V. K	C. V. K	C. V	
				Mithuna	Matrika
S—11.5 R—3·5 G—7 M—9 P—6 D—6 n—3	S M G	SGP— 24.5 RMD—18.5 MDS— 26-5 PnR— 12-5 DSG— 24.5 nRM— 15·5	MDS—57% DSG } 53% SGP } RMD nRM PnR	1. (MDS—DSG) 2. (nRM—RMD)	1. SGMD-72% 2. RMDn-46%

Total 46 Scale : S R G M P Dn

Specimen No. 12

Word theme :

Nayano mojilo agey
Sesey bandey dilkey
Bhangi dilo rey sokhi
Amaro dilke.

Translation :

I was charmed by the sight at first
Then my heart was bound,
Oh my friend,
My heart is broken.

Notation :

The song is complete in 8 bars, each bar containing 6 beats divided as 3/3/

	$\dot{\dot{C}}$	$\dot{C}$	—	$\dot{C}$	$\dot{C}$	—	B^b	A	—	G	F	—
1	$\dot{S}$	$\dot{S}$	—	$\dot{S}$	$\dot{S}$	—	n	Da	—	P	M	—
	Na	ya	.	no	mo	—	ji	lo	.	a	gey	—

	G	A	A	A	G	—	F	—	E	D	C	—
2	P	Da	Da	Da	P	—	M	—	G	R	S	—
	Se	sey	.	ban	dhey	.	di	—	l	ke	.	.
	F	F	—	F	F	—	G	A	G	F	E	D
3	M	M	—	M	M	—	P	Da	P	M	Ga	R
	Bha	ngi	.	di	.	.	lo	rey	.	so	khi	.
	C	D	$\overline{CD}$	E	E	—	D	C	—	C	—	—
4	S	R	$\overline{SR}$	Ga	Ga	—	R	S	—	S	—	—
	A	.	ma	.	ro	.	di	l	.	ke	.	.

TABLE 16

N.V	C.N.V	V.K	C.V.K	C.V	
				Mithuna	Matrika
S—14.5	S	SGP—25.5	MDS—66%	(1) MDS-DSG)	1. SGMD 76%
R—4 5	M	RMD—21.5	SGP—53%	(2) (nRM-RMD)	2. RMDn 47%
G—5	P	MDS—31.5	DSG		
M—12		PnR—11.5	RMD		
P—6		DSG—24.5	nRM		
D—5		nRM—17 5	PnR		
n—1					
Total 48				Seale : S R G M P D n	

Specimen No. 13

Word theme :

Hamey tua soney
Piriti patali
Adha diney amay
Ki dosey kandali
Mono mataye
Phesadey phelali
Dinobondhu bole
Dukhey buk bhasaye.

Translation :

I fell in love with you!
For what fault of mine,
Did you make me weep before the day was over?
You have put me to trouble
By charming my mind
So says Dinabandhu with a sorrowing heart.

Notation

The song is complete in 16 bars, each containing 6 beats divided as 3/3

	A	A	B^b	B^b	—	B^b	C	C	—	C	—	—
1.	Da	Da	n	n	—	n	S	S	—	C	—	—
	Ha	mey	.	tu	.	a	r	so	.	ne	.	.
	F	—	G	—	A	B^b	G	A	G	F	E	—
2.	M	—	P	—	Da	n	P	Da	P	M	Ga	—
	Pi	.	ri	.	ti	.	pa	ta	.	li	.	.
	F	F	—	F	—	G	A	G	F	E	D	—
3.	M	M	—	M	—	P	Da	P	M	Ga	R	—
	A	dha	.	di	.	ney	.	a	.	ma	ye	.
	C	D	$\overline{CD}$	E	E	—	D	C	—	C	—	—
4.	S	R	$\overline{SR}$	Ga	Ga	—	R	S	—	S	—	—
	Ki	.	do	.	sey	.	kan	da	.	li	.	.
	B^b	A	A	B^b	—	C	—	D	—	C	—	—
5.	n	Da	Da	n	—	S	—	R	—	S	—	—
	Mo	no	.	ma	.	ta	.	y	.	e	—	—
	F	—	G	—	A	B^b	G	A	G	F	E	—
6	M	—	P	—	Da	n	P	Da	P	M	Ga	—
	Phe	.	sa	.	de	y	phe	la	.	li	.	.
	F	F	—	F	—	G	A	G	F	E	D	—
7,	M	M	—	M	—	P	Da	P	M	Ga	R	—
	Di	no	.	bo	n	dhu	.	bo	.	le	y	.
	C	D	$\overline{CD}$	E	E	D	C	C	—	C	—	—
8.	S	R	$\overline{SR}$	G	G	R	S	S	—	S	—	—
	du	.	khe	.	bu	k	bha	sa	.	ye	.	.

Hamey tua Soney

TABLE 17

N.V	C.N.V	V.K	C.V.K	C.V Mithuna	Matrik
S—24	S	SGP—47	MDS—54%	(1) (MDS-DSG)	(1) MDSG—66%
R—12	M	RMD—40	SGP—49%	(2) (nRM-RMD)	(2) RMDn—51%
G—11	P	MDS—52	DSG		
M—18		PnR—33	RMD		
P—12		nRM—39	nRM		
D—10		DSG—45	PnR		
n— 9					
Total 96			Scale—S R G M P D n		

Specimen No. 14

Word theme :

Sokhi re ki kori bolo
Prano boro byakulo
Rojoni probhat hoilo dakhona
Ki dosey nagor ailona
Kunjo sajono kori
Asben shyam potho heri
Sokaley sanjhe phuler bichhona
Ki dosey nagor ailona
Kopaley sindoorer bindoo
Mukho jano purno Indoo
Hridoyete dilo koto jatona
Ki dosey nagor ailona
Nandalal kisorey boley
Ei chhilo ki mor kopaley
Mono banchha bidhata purailo na
Ki dosey nagor ailona.

Translation :

What to do my sakhi
My heart is restless
Look, the night is over
For what fault of mine my beloved didn't come !
I have decorated the garden
To welcome my Shyam
I have spread my bed from morning to night in expectation !
Why didn't my beloved come ?
With vermillion spot on his forehead
And face like full moon,
He has caused so much pain in my heart
Why didn't my beloved come ?
Nandalal Kishore says
Was this my fate ?
God did not fulfil my desire !
Why didn't my beloved come ?

Notation :

1	A	B^b	C	D	E^b	F	E	F	—	—	—	—
	D	n	S	R	Ga	M	Ga	M	—	—	—	—
	So	khi	re	ki	ko	ri	bo	lo	.	.	.	.

2 G A $\overline{GA}$ | $B^{b}\overline{A}$ $\overline{GF}$ $\overline{EC}$ | $\overline{ED}$ $\overline{CB^{b}}$ A | — — —

P Da $\overline{PDa}$ | $n\overline{Da}$ $\overline{PM}$ $\overline{GaS}$ | $\overline{GaR}$ $\overline{Sn}$ $\overline{Da}$ | — — —

Pra no bo | ro bya ku | lo . . | . . .

3 A A A B^{b} C D | C — $\overline{DE}$ E D E | C D C A — —

Da Da Da n S R | S — $\overline{RGa}$ Ga R Ga | S R S Da — —

Ro jo ni . pro . | bha . t hoi lo . | da kho . na . .

4 A A B^{b} C C D | C — $\overline{DE}$ E D F | C — — — — —

Da Da n S S R | S — $\overline{RGa}$ R Ga R | S — — — — —

ki do . se na . | go . r ay lo . | na . . . . .

Sokhirere ki kori bolo

TABLE 18

N.V	C.N.V	V K	C.V.K	C.V Mithunas	C.V Mutrikas
S—16	S	SGP—25.5	DSG—65%	(1) (MDS—DSG)	SGMD 76%
R—8.5	D	RMD—30.5	MDS—63%	(2) (nRM—RMD)	RMDn 58%
G—7.5	R	MDS—38	SGP—43%		
M—6.5	G	PnR—14.5	RMD		
P—2	M	DSG—39.0	nRM		
D—15.5		nRM—19			
n—4					

Total 60 Scale : S R G M P D n

Word theme : (First stanza) of a big song.

Kolijuger Bahu biti
Ulotiey bandhey jhunti
Payer nupur jhumur jhumur
Chomkey bijuli

Muke keyson sajali
Jeyson chomkey bijuli
Bihayla ke chhairey hamey
Sangaila mojali.

Translation :

In what a peculiar way
The maidens and housewives in this age of *Kolijug*
Do their hair !
The bells of their foot bangles
Tinkle when they move.
Sparkling like lightening.

O, in what a way you have dressed me up !
I look like lightning !
I have left my husband
and have charmed somebody else !

Notation :

The notation of the first stanza of the song is given below. The same tune is repeated with different word themes. The first stanza is complete in 14 bars, containing 6 beats each, divided as 3/3.

1	A	B^b	C	D	E	F	E	F	—	—	—		
	Da	n	S	R	Ga	M	Ga	M	—	—	—		
	Ko	li	ju	ger	bo	hu	bi	ti	.	.	.	.	
2	A	A	A	A	$\overline{AB^b}$	A	F	E	—	$\overline{FE}$	D	C	
	Da	Da	Da	Da	$\overline{Dn}$	D	M	Ga	—	$\overline{MGa}$	R	S	
	U	lo	ti	e	ban	.	dhe	.	—	jhun	ti	.	
3	C	C	C	C	B^b	A	A	G	F	F	G	G	
	S	S	S	S	n	Da	Da	P	M	M	P	P	
	Pa	yer	nu	pur	jhu	mu	r	jhu	mu	r	cho	m	
	B^b	A	G	F	G	—	—	—	—	—	E	E	
	n	Da	P	M	P	—	—	—	—	—	Ga	Ga	
	ke	bi	.	ju	li	.	.	.	.	.	Mu	ke	

*According to the Hindu Cosmology universal time operates in a cycle of four ages moving gradually from the age of Truth and Harmony to *Kolijug* or the age of chaos.

4	E	E	G	F	E	E	D	E^b	D	C	A	B^b
	Ga	Ga	P	M	Ga	M	R	g	R	S	Da	n
	Key	so	n	sa	—	ja	li	.	.	jey	so	n
5	C	C	E^b	D	—	C	C	—	—	—	—	—
	S	S	g	R	—	S	S	—	—	—	—	—
	Cho	m	key	bi	—	ja	li	.	.	.	-	-
6	$\dot{C}$	—	$\dot{C}$	$\dot{C}$	$\dot{C}$	$\dot{C}$	B^b	A	G	F	F	—
	$\dot{S}$	—	$\dot{S}$	$\dot{S}$	$\dot{S}$	$\dot{S}$	n	Da	P	M	M	—
	.	.	Bi	hai	la	ke	chhai	rey	·	ha	mey	.
7	F	G	B^b	A	G	F	G	F	E	—	—	—
	M	P	n	Da	P	M	P	M	Ga	—	—	—
	Sa	nga	i	la	.	mo	ja	.	li	.	.	.

TABLE 19

N.V.	C.N V	V.K	C.V.K	C.V Mithuna-Matrika
S— 22·5	S	SgP— 34·5	MDS—55·7%	(MDS-DSG)—SGMD—69 2%
R— 6·5	G	SGP—50	DSG—54·6%	(nRM-RMD)—RMDn—43·2%
g— 2	M	RMD—37·5	SGP— 52 %	
G— 17·5		gPn— 18·5	RMD	(SgP-gPn)—SgPn— 40·6%
M—18·5		MDS—53·5	SgP	
P— 10		PnR—23	nRM	
D—12·5		DSG—52·5	PnR	
n— 6·5		nRM—31·5	gPn	
Total 96				

In the songs Nachni Saila 9, 10, 11, 12, the priority of the *Khandamerus* and the *Matrikas* are distinctly defined. The dominant *Matrika* is (e) SGMD, which corresponds to a large number of Kheyal and Thumri themes in *Khambaj Raga* (Sanyal 1959 : 58). The sequence of the *Matrikas are :* { (e)SGMD, (f)RMDn } in all the four samples with different values. The melodic movement of the Nachni Saila songs are different for different samples. We observed in case of other forms, *Karam, Tusu, Danr Saila* that same tune is repeated with different word themes in different songs. In Nachni Saila, new compositions are made by individual creative artists.

In sample (13), in addition to { e,f } , (d) SgPn has been included in the last position. The touch of the note 'g' brings in some

new variety on the core structure of Khambaj whether the inclusion (d) indicates a tendency to mix Sindhu or develop the Sindhu class is not apparent from this single sample. In other samples (d) may occupy higher position.

Even in this sample individual singers may make minor embellishments which may shift the *Matrika* sequence to { a, b, c, d } or even { a, b, d, e } or { e, d, f } . Thus, the distinction between these classes do not seem to be very rigid.

A specimen of the song belonging to a group termed as *Khyapar Dhua,* sung by travelling sadhus is given below :

Specimen No. 16

Word theme (first two stanzas) :

Gourango bhujongo phoni
Phoni dongson korey jaharey
Seki grihey roitey parey
Hotat *Baul* korey

Gour premer emni dhara
Bindhey korey jarasara
Maney na se aptohara
Donni bandhay ki korey

Translation :

*Gouranga the poisonous snake !
He, who is bitten by the poisonous snake
Can he rest at home any more ?
He is turned to a *Baul* in a moment

Such is the way of love of Gour !
One forgets oneself with the piercing pain.

Word theme (fiirst two stanzas) :

The melodic theme is complete in 20 bars, each having 8 beats divided as 2/2/2/2/. The same tune is repeated for the word theme of the subsequent stanzas.

D	E	D	C	C	—	C	—	C	—	C	—	C	—	F	F
R	Ga	R	S	S	—	S	—	S	—	S	—	S	—	M	M
Go	u	ra	ngo	bhu	.	jo	n	go	.	pho	.	ni	.	pho	ni

*Name of Sri Chaitanya.

F	G	G	F	F	F	E	D	C	C	C	D	$\overline{CD}$	E	D	E
M	P	P	M	M	M	Ga	R	S	S	S	R	$\overline{SR}$	Ga	R	Ga
Do	ng	so	n	ko	.	re	.	ja	.	ha	.	re	.	.	.

R	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Gou	ra	n	go	bhu	.	jo	n	go	.	.	.	.	.	.	.

C	C	F	F	F	—	F	—	G	$B^{\flat}$	$B^{\flat}$	$B^{\flat}$	A	—	G	—
S	S	M	M	M	—	M	—	P	n	n	n	Da	—	P	—
.	.	Se	ki	gri	.	hey	.	ro	i	te	.	pa	.	re	.

F	F	F	F	E	E	D	D	C	—	C	D	$\overline{CD}$	E	E	E
M	M	M	M	Ga	Ga	R	R	S	—	S	R	$\overline{SR}$	Ga	R	Ga
Ho	.	ta	t	Ba	.	u	l	Ko	.	.	.	re	.	.	.

D	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
R	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Gou	ra	n	go	bhu	.	jo	n	go	.	.	.	.	.	.	.

C	C	$B^{\flat}$	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	D	$\overline{CD}$	E
S	S	n	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	R	$\overline{SR}$	Ga
.	.	Go	u	r	pre	me	r	E	m	ni	.	dha	.	ra	.

C	C	E	E	D	E	D	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
S	S	G	G	R	G	R	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Bin	dhe	.	ko	re	.	ja	.	ra	.	sa	.	ra			

C	C	C	D	F	F	F	F	G	$B^{\flat}$	$B^{\flat}$	$B^{\flat}$	A	A	G	G
S	S	S	R	M	M	M	M	P	n	n	n	Da	Da	P	P
.	.	Ma	ney	.	na	se	.	a	p	to	.	ha	.	ra	.

F	F	F	F	E	E	D	D	C	—	C	D	$\overline{CD}$	E	D	E
M	M	M	M	Ga	Ga	R	R	S	—	S	R	$\overline{SR}$	Ga	R	Ga
Dho	n	ni	.	ban	.	dha	ye	ki	.	ko	.	rey	.	.	.

Gourango

TABLE 20

N.V	C.V.N.	V.K.	C.V.K.	C.V. Mithunas-Matrikas
S—79	S	SGP—103	MDS—66·8%	(1) (MDS-DSG)—SGMD 77 %
R—22	M		SGP—6·44 %	(2) (nRM-RMD)—RMDn 35·6%
	R	RMD—50	DSG—62 %	
			nRM—	
G—16	G		RMD—	
M—24		MDS—107	PnR —	
P— 8		PnR— 37		
D— 4		DSG— 99		
n— 7		nRM— 53		
Total 160			Scale : S R g G M P D n	

The sequence of the *Matrikas* is { e, f } , similar to most of the *Nachni Saila* samples. The rhythmic structure (4/4) is different from all other samples.

(To be continued)

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SANKAR SEN GUPTA

WOMEN IN ANCIENT LITERATURE AND FOLKLORE

(Continued from previous issue)

We should remember here that for the last 150 years Hindu reformers worked hard to remove some of the disabilities of Indian women, especially those from the higher castes. *Sati* was abolished in 1829 which we discussed earlier. The age of marriage for girl was raised to 10 from 8 according to India's Penal Code of 1860. The Child Marriage Act of 1929 laid down the age 14 as the minimum age for the marriage of the girls. The evil effects of child marriage were published by the great reformers which were also followed by the social-political leaders for decades before legislation was passed. Again was passed the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955. This raised the minimum age to 15. But the movement for raising the marriage age of the girls has not yet been stopped. There are some people who want to fix it at 19 or 21. The people of this idea are in favour of family planning, an officially recognised movement of modern India to control the population growth. Of course the age of marriage for the girls of the middle and upper caste families in Bengal has come to an average of 22 in general. Besides propaganda against child marriage, reformers, especially the upper caste Hindu reformers, conducted propaganda in favour of widow marriage It is due to their efforts that Widow Remarriage Act was passed in 1856. Then came the Indian Divorce Act, 1869. This again enabled Indian women to be dissolved the marriage entered into by Christians. Until 1954 when the Special Marriage Act was passed a marriage was solemnized under the Special Marriage Act of 1872. During this time we were also governed by the Indian Divorce Act of 1869, in the matter of divorce.[83]

Let us remember *purdah* system here once again. The earliest reference to the *purdah* system is to be found in the epic c. 100 B.C.. There we see that some kind of *purdah* was observed in certain royal families, which felt, probably on account of a notion of prestige, that royal ladies should not come in the gaze of vulgar eyes. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries *purdah* system became quite common in Bengal, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh. Both Vidyapati and Chandidas have referred to it.

It would, however, appear that soon after the beginning of the

83. Kapadia, K. M. op. cit.

Christian era, a section of society began to advocate for greater seclusion for women. *Purdah* also made its appearance in some dramas of Bhasa (c. 200 A.D.). Though in Indian society as a whole there is nothing like the modern *purdah* system in existence, there were certain restrictions on the movements of women. They could go out, visit their friends and relations but decorum required that they should not stay their houses for the night, or when their business was over. Even in the pre-Muslim times there was a section in society which advocated the use of veil for royal ladies for the purpose of increasing prestige. Gradually the veil was popularised which is prevalent now among the Hindu housewives. The general adoption of *purdah* system by the ruling and aristrocratic families of Hindu community is subsequent to advent of the Muslim rule. It should be remembered in this connection that Muslim women are prisoner to their menfolk. They are not entitled to *namaj* or pray to Allah in a party along with their menfolk. They are forbidden to attend to the burial ground for burying their dead husbands or sons. But a few aristrocratic women are found to fight in the battle field behind their men as well as some of them are seen in the top of administration. Some of the names of such women have already been mentioned earlier who do not come to any per centage. Further, it is necessary to remember about the social startus of Muslim women that there are one lakh and forty thousand *Paigambar* (prophet) of the Muslims but not a single of them is a woman. Besides, Muslim male can divorce his wife any time, by uttering the word *talak* for three times and immediately after the divorce if the divorced woman can spend a rupee and a quarter (*panch-siki*) she is entitled to remarry again to another person. But if she is pregnant, she will have to wait till she is delivered, if not, the Mollas or the Mollajans (priests) will ask her to perform *iddot* ceremony to enable her to be a bride again. The divorced husband too is entitled to remarry another woman, he can again divorce her in the same way. In order to avoid much unpleasant situation the Muslim women have taken their shelter under *purdah*. From them it has come to the common Hindu, partly as an imitation from the conqureors and partly as an additional protection for the womenfolk.

II

Enough has been said about the womankind in a general way. Here we will discuss in short a few positions of a woman in her life-cycle. We will start this discussion with wifehood.

Wifehood

Among the various types of human relationships, that between man and woman is the most important. The status of woman is the most significant criterion of progress of any society or culture. In the lower levels of culture this status "is one of dependence in theory and practice, woman being meant as an object of pleasure to man, the stronger sex. But in the earliest glimpse of record Indian society we find this stage already passed. Associated with body and mind, it becomes conditioned as personality with its sex and other differentiations." There were spiritual equality of man and man and man and woman, and the social practice has increased after Vedic period. "Indian thought views woman exactly as it views man as a person with a destiny. The search for this destiny makes her a pilgrim of worldly exellence." This has led to important consequences for national ideal of womanhood. Thus the "two egocentric individuals in search of life-fulfilment, and brought into most intimate social relations, are husband and wife in marriage." To realize this object of fulfilment, they have to learn to give themselves to each other before seeking to take from each other. "To teach only the wife to give, and emphasise this again and again, is to upset the balance; and to make the husband learn to take and neglect to give leads to less than fulfilment for both."[84] An English proverb goes thus,

"One should choose a wife with the ears rather than with eyes," for "a man's best fortune, or his worst, is his wife;" a Chinese proverb, "Negligence in farming may induce temporary poverty, but a mistake in marrying blights the whole life." Indeed, since the wife is the key to the house, he is by general consent a fortunate man who alights on a good one, for—

> A little house well filled,
> A little land well tilled,
> And a little wife well willed
> Are great riches."

And again:

> Two things doth prolong this life,
> A quiet heart and a loving wife;

whereas a bad wife, as the Germans say, "is the shipwreck of her

84. Rangananda, Swami. op. cit.

husband." It is said in China again that "the more a wife loves her husband the more she corrects his faults;" and, on the other hand, accordisg to a Spanish proverb, "the woman who has a bad husband makes a confidant of her maid." An Indian wife says "A chaste wife is very bashful, and a bad one a great talker," also "A virtuous wife causes her husband to be honoured, a bad one brings him to shame." Equally significant is the Persian proverb which describes a bad wife as "a tree growing on the wall," i.e. like the fig tree, which undermines the wall by its roots. A goodlocking wife, it would appear, is not always a blessing, for—

> a fair wife, a white horse, and a back door
> will quickly make a rich man poor,

She is supposed to need looking after, inasmuch as he who hath a fair wife needs more than two eyes" and "he that hath a white horse and a fair wife never wants trouble." A Spanish proverbs, "A handsome wife brings no fortune," a Marathi proverb repeats the same warning, "A goodlooking wife is world's, an ugly one is our own." Again a Chinese proverb "Ugly wives and stupid maids are priceless treasures," for there is no chance of any one's running away with them;" with which may be classed the German adages "The blind man's wife needs no paint," and "A deaf husband and a blind wife are always a happy couple."

According to an old proverb, "An obedient wife commands her husband." It is generally agreed that no greater misfortune can happen to a man than to have a wife his master," for, as a Welsh proverb has been aptly translated tells us :

> The rule of a wife,
> a daughter's ill-life
> a son that is an untaught clown
> may turn the whole world upside down.

We find various suggestions in the matter a wife's counsel, one proverb saying "Take your wife's first advice, not her second," the reason assigned being that "Women are wise offhand, and fools on reflection." Gossiping wives are to be avoided, for, "The gadding wife will see a snake in the fire," that is, will make any execuse to run out; and a Sinhalese proverb to this effect, "You must get a talkative wife if you wish to receive slape on the face from every one," for she is sure, sooner or later, to make mischief. It is further said that "The beauty of a woman without a husband is in vain" and conversely, "A man without a wife is a house without a roof." It is also said that "Without

a wife the house is the abode of the devil;" but "With a wife the house doth joy," and "the death of the wife is ruin to the house." A Marathi proverb says, "The husband is the life of the woman." Again, it is said "Patience, recitude, friend, and wife, all four are tested by calamity," for, speaking of the average wife, it is added "She loves and she serves, but in the time of need she is off."*

A wife is an economic unit of production in the folk society. Thus she must be healthy, must have energy and vigour and must be capable of hard work. Outward beauty of a girl is seldom a matter of consideration in the choice of a daughter-in-law. So the folk instruction is *ghar bandho khato; garu keno choto; biye karo kalo, tae grihasther bhalo,*[85] build a small abode, buy a petty cow, marry a black skined girl, they are good for a family man. Every Indian girl wants to be ever dutiful to her husband, so she prays—

> May I be true to my husband
> Go on, go on, O drum
> May I have my honour in the village assembly
> May my words be true amidst my female friends.[86]

An ideal wife is she who has

mithe bol sasuri puje,
apandhan apni bujhe
swami seba, sanje bati,
Dake bale lakshmir smriti.[87]

It means, who has sweet-voice, worshipper of the mother-in-law, and one who keeps accounts of the wealth of the family, performs her duty to the husband and offers lamp to the god in the evening, bears the sign of Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth.

*Folklore of Women, by T. F. Thiselton-Dyer, *Reprint* by Singing Tree Press, Michigan, 1968.

85. ঘর বাঁধো খাট,
গরু কেনো ছোট,
বিয়ে করো কাল,
তাই গৃহস্থের ভালো।
লোকে বলে কাল খেঁদী,
যার বউ তার পরমনিধি।

86. Barua, Hem. op. cit.

87. মিঠে বোল শাশুরী পুজে,
আপন ধন আপনি বুঝে,
স্বামী সেবা সাঁজে বাতি,
ডাক বলে লক্ষ্মীর স্মৃতি।

When a girl is blessed for a long life along with her husband, she feels happy and sings—

My husband, oh my husband, brave and sweet
My husband melts, where I do not see him
My husband, oh my husband, brave and sweet
I made an offering of a buffalo calf to Etawua Church
I cannot see my darling. . .
My husband, oh my husband, brave and sweet
I made an offering of a small bird to Raiumala Church
I cannot see my darling[88].....

But life is hard. The following is an poignant example of economic struggle for life. This is true social realism and from this sometimes misunderstanding and conflicts arise. Even inspite of the greatest effort how folk people is unable to provide the family is truly represested in this following Oriya song :

For this stomach,
For this stomach, I left for Bengal
For this stomach, I had all struggle
For this stomach, I pounded rice
For this stomach, I reaped the paddy
For this stomach, I worked on a shop
For this stomach, I received cane beating on my back
For this stomach, I went on dancing
For this stomach, I took to spinning
For this stomach, I find abuses on my lips
For this stomach, I met Yam Raj
For this stomach.[89]

How can a wife be satisfied with such sentimental words if she is empty-belly ? Quarrels arise and in a quarreling period a housewife of such a poor class say *bhat debar khamata nai kil marar gonsai*[90]

88. Barua, Hem op. cit.
89. ibid
90. ভাত দেবার ক্ষমতা নাই.
কিল মারার গোসাঞ
অভাবে নাতজামাই ভাতার।
সোণাবী পটলের ব্যাপারী
একটি পটল দের না
যে মাঁবি তরকারী।
অভাবে স্বভাব নষ্ট, মুখ নষ্ট ক্রোধে,
কড়ার ক্ষেত নষ্ট, স্ত্রী নষ্ট মারণে।

which means, he has no capacity for findisg food, but is game at dealing fisticuffs. So, *abhabe nat jamai bhatar*, meaning, when there is no help the husband of the grand-daughter becomes the husband because he helps his grandmother for her existence.

In order to avoid such economic distress often young girls are married to wealthy old men.* The following is an example of the ill-luck of a young wife who is married to an old man. She has food to eat but no pleasure. Thus,

> The young wife makes bed
> Weeping she spreads the rags
> And waits for the old man
> Who cannot content her.

Below is another song where a daughter-in-law is getting troubled in the hands of the members of her mother-in-law's family :

> Thus spake a bird in Jahanabad
> The mother-in-law taunts, the father-in-law taunts
> Made to bear this, to my mother's home let me go

* একশটাকা দিলি বাবা দিলি বুড়ো বরে হে,
বরের সঙ্গে যাতে হ'লো পুরুলা সহরে গো।
পুরুলার লোকে বলে এটা তোমার কে বটে ?
লজ্জাক কারণ বলি, ঠাকুরদা বটে গো।
(লোকশ্রুতি, কলিকাতা)

কন্যাপণ রাখিয়া পাশা খেলার রীতি অনেক সমাজে প্রচলিত ছিল, মাহাতোদের একটি গানে কুমারী মেয়ের যে ব্যাকুলতা প্রকাশ পেয়েছে তা লজ্জাস্কর—

কন্যা:—পাশা খেলতে গ্যালি বাপু জুয়া খেলতে গেলি হে,
কেনে বাপ বিটি হারিলে।
গরু মো-ষিণী. বাবা, সেই না হারিলে
কেনে বাপু, বিটি-হারিলে ?
পিতা—গাই, মোষিণী, বিটি, ঘরের শিরোমণি—
তুমি বিটি পরের অধীন।
অর্থাৎ বাবা তুমি পাশা বা জুয়া খেলতে গিয়ে
কেন তোমার কন্যাকে বাজী রাখলে, আর
কেনই বা কন্যাকে হারালে ? গরু মহিষ
থাকা সত্ত্বেও তুমি তাদেরকে নিয়ে বাজী না ধরে
মেয়েকে হেরে আসলে ? উত্তরে পিতা বলছে,
গরু মহিষ গৃহের শিরোমনিস্বরূপ। তুমি পরের
অধীন (অর্থাৎ বিয়ে হয়ে গেলিই পর), তোমাকে
পরের হাতে যত শীঘ্রই তুলে দেওয়া যায়, ততই
ভাল। (লোকশ্রুতি, কলিকাতা)

Thus spake a bird in Jahanabad
The Jeth taunts, the Jethani taunts,
Made to bear this, to my mother's home, let me go.
The co-wife taunts, the beloved taunts,
Made to bear this, poison let me take
Thus spake a bird in Jahanabad

In such a situation she very judiciously complains to her husband that why everybody is taunting her? She wants to know,

My sweet-heart, who is better than me?
My sweet-heart kept a parrot
I'd teach it to speak
My sweet-heart who is better than me?
My sweet-heart brought a co-wife
I'd teach her to dance
My sweet-heart who is better than me?
My sweet-heart brought a mare
I'd teach her to jump
My sweet-heart who is better han me?[91]

We may, however, point out that the ideal love and harmony between the husband and wife are necessary for the full growth and development of the family life and to promote the preservation and progress of society and its culture by enjoining upon the couple the procreation of children. Motherhood therefore has been the cherished ideal of every Hindu woman.

Motherhood

Motherhood is spiritual transformation of wifehood. This motherhood ideal is the highest peak of womanhood according to Indian culture. "To a Hindu, God is the mother of all creation. A nation that has educated itself to look upon God as mother has learnt to invest its view of women with utmost tenderness and reverence. The culture of the Hindu trains him to look upon woman, nay, to look upon the female of all species, as forms of Divine Mother." This we have discussed previously. This lady encompasses the whole family with her pure love. She is apparently simple, yet modern with an appeal to the modernness.

91. Amir Hussain "The Song of Patha", Folklore, Calcutta, November, 1968

It is hardly necessary to describe in detail how the ancient idea of regarding the mother had profoundly influenced Indian mode of thinking, literary and peaceful pursuits of life. Even the educated classes who have thoroughly imbibed and assimilated western ideas felt difficulty in giving up age-old habits, traditions, ideas and beliefs. Therefore in no circumstance a son can abandon his mother even if she is boycotted socially and religiously. He has to respect her more than the father. Thus we hear a saying, *anek durbhagya jar ghare nai ma, anek durbhagya jar nai anna cha,*[92] which means, it is a great misfortune for one who has no mother at home, as well as food and residence.

There are contrary views too. The only matricide known to Indian tradition is Parasurama. In his case the legend is probably invented to emphasise the duty of obeying the father. In this case his mother's resurrection is assured with the provision that she should never recollect her murder.

In the folk saying there is an idea where a mother feels sorry for the behavious of her son. She says. *beta biyalam bauke dilam, jhee biyalam jamaike dilam, apni holam bandi, pa chariye kandte basi*[93] meaning, I gave birth to son who has been given to my daughter-in-law, I gave birth to daughter, she has been given in marriage to the son-in-law, now I am all alone, I am passing my days as a maid under the control of my daughter-is-law, let me cry aloud sitting in a resting pose. But this type of conflict are not very common. The mother is so highly honoured in India that Hindus are not satisfied until they see divinity in the form of earthly mother. They say, one mother is greater than a thousand fathers, therefore, the Hindus prefer to call Supreme Being, as The Mother of the Universe. The Divine Mother is Greater than the "creator" of other religions. She is the producer of the first-born, lord of all creatures. Thus the cult of mother goddess is so venerable.

Step-mother

It is quite common to have more than one wife living in the same

92. অনেক দুর্ভাগা যার ঘরে নেই মা,
অনেক দুর্ভাগা যার নেই অন্ন ছা।

93. বেটা বিয়ালাম বৌকে দিলাম,
ঝি বিয়ালাম জামাইকে দিলাম,
আপনি হলাম বাঁদী—
পা ছড়িয়ে কাঁদতে বসি।
গিন্নী আছিলাম কালে—
জল বিলাইছি পাবলা পাবল',
তেল বিলাইছি নালে।

home. The arrival of a step-mother at home is a threat to the children who also lose their confidence in and respect for their fathers. Thus a Badaga proverb goes on *Bala avve bandale appa bava* which means, step-mother at home makes the father a brother-in-law to his own children. Then there is a Bengali proverb in which it is said, *satmar bhalabasha panta bhate ghee, mathati muraye eso tel palta di,*[94] meaning, the step-mother's affection is like pouring ghee in stale rice, she says, shave your head clean and come, let me annoint it with oil and pour water.

There are quite a number of folktales like "Sukhu ar Dukhu", "Kuku-Mata" in Bengal which we know from L. B. Day, D. C. Sen, Dakshinaranan Mitra Majumdar, Sibratan Mitra, Henz Mode, Arun Ray, Mozharul Islam and others. Thus we do not want to repeat that which are so well-known to the students and scholars of folklore.

Daughter :

We will now look into the position of a daughter. It has been seen that a daughter has a lower status than a son. But the contrary views are also found. When a mother bore only sons and the parents hanker for a daughter, the birth of a daughter is welcome, she gets a most honourable status. It is not uncommon that a mother performs Gauri Puja and other rites to have a daughter. It is said in a popular saying hat *teen cheler par hai jhee, panta bhate dhale ghee,*[95] which means, if there is a daughter after three sons that family is so fortunate that ghee is poured out there in the stale rice. This is a strong rooted belief in Bengal and perhaps in other parts too. Still then a daughter is not allowed for the ancestor-worship. It is the sons alone who are regarded as eligible for offering oblation to their forefathers. Thus it is difficult to formulate any theory about the position and status of a daughter in the Hindu society.

It will be clarified in the next chapter that the women in the Vedic period enjoyed a higher status than that were enjoyed by their sisters in the post-Vedic period. The Creator Brahma had divided His own body into two, became male by one half and female by the other half. So wife is *ardhangini* and without her human society cannot grow or prosper. But it should be noted in this connection that the Lord

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94. সংসার ভালবাসা পান্তাভাতে ঘি,
মাথাটি মুড়িয়ে এসো তেল পাল্টাদি ॥

95. তিন ছেলের পর হয় ঘি, পান্তাভাতে ঢালে ঘি।
মেয়ে হব ঘর নিকুব পরব পাটের শাড়ী,
শ্বশুরবাড়ীতে চড়ে যাব রাজা শ্বশুর বাড়ী।

faced trouble in creating a woman, how he managed to suceed in that has been described in the concluding chapter of this study.

In ancient India the birth of a daughter was not deplorable. In course of time, in all patriarchal societies, the birth of a daughter became an unwelcome event. So there is a saying *puter mute kari,*[96] even the urine of a son brings money. This idea, even today, remains unchanged, but shows some amount of alteration in regards to features connected with economic pursuist as well as ranking in society, on the basis of occupation. The economic development of the recent past had two important effects—switchover from subsistence to the cash economy and the breaking up of some old ideas. It helps to establish contractual impersonal and pecuniary relations and opening of new avenues of earning one's livelihood in the newly developed society and life. After all, a son is accepted as a permanent economic asset of the family after which all parents hanker. But then, there is an ancient ritual for ensuring the birth of a scholarly daughter (Bri. Up. IV, 4, 18). It is true, of course, that this ritual did not become as popular as the *pumsavana** that is prescribed for the pocuring the birth of a son; but it clearly shows that the cultured parents were often as anxious for a daughter as they were for a son. It is said about the sons that *jatakshan dudh, tatakhan put*[97] meaning, as long the son is fed at his mother's breast so long he is mother's alone. After that he goes to his wife or to others. This is the inner meaning of this saying. Some thinkers have also said that a talented, well mannered and well behaved daughter is better than a son (Sam. III, 2, 6). In cultured circles such a daughter was regarded as the pride of the family (Kumarsamabhava VI, 63). So the only daughter of a parent is proud to say, *ekla mayer jhee garab karbo na to ki,*[98] meaning, I am the only daughter of my mother, why should not I be proud?

Again it is said in Germany, "Daughters are easy to rear; but difficult to marry;" and in Spanish adage it is said, "When a good offer comes for a daughter, don't wait till her father returns from

96. পুতের মুতে কড়ি, মেয়ের গলায় দড়ি।

* সনাতন ধর্মের প্রতিষ্ঠা ও বিকাশের সঙ্গে সঙ্গে গর্ভদান থেকে বিবাহ পর্যন্ত দশবিধ সংস্কার চালু হ'ল, তারমধ্যে গর্ভদান, পুংসবন ও সীমান্তোন্নয়ন—এই তিনটিকে গর্ভ সংস্কার বলা হয়। পুংসবন হচ্ছে পুত্রের জন্মের জন্য ধর্মীয় অনুষ্ঠান, ও আনুসঙ্গিক ভেষজের প্রয়োগ ব্যবস্থা।

সোনার আংটি আবার বাঁকা।

97. যতক্ষণ দুধ, ততক্ষণ পুত।
যতদিন থাকে কাঁথায় মুত, ততদিন থাকে মায়ের পুত।

98. একলা মায়ের ঝি, গরব করবো না তো কি?
বাপের ঘরের ঝি, আদর করবো না তো কি?
আদরের হয়েছে যা কি, দেখসে পাড়না পেতেছি।

market," for fear the opportunity should slip by; another German saying reminding us that "Daughters and dead fish are no keeping wares."

Grown-up daughters at home would occasionally seem to have been regarded the opposite of a blessing to their father, for "Three daughters and a mother" runs the German proverb, "are four devils for the father;" but, it is added, "Would you know your daughter, see her in company," for then she will cultivate every charm to make herself as attractive as possible.

Folk maxims of this kind might easily be multiplied, a popular Welsh adage reminds us that "the worst store is a maid unbestowed," but when it is remembered in words of our old proverb that "every Jack must have his Jill," there is hope for every daugher of Eve, for she may be the object of a passion similar to that described by Charles Decance :

> By the margins of fair Zurich's waters
> Dwelt a youth, whose fond heart, night and day,
> For the fairest of fair Zurich's daughters,
> In a dream of love melted Way. *

In the primitive and backward societies where the custom of bride-price prevailed, the birth of a daughter is a welcome event there. In some folk sayings it is said that *meyer nam Feli, jame nileo geli, jamai nileo geli,*[90] meaning, the name of the daughter is Feli, she will depart from her parent whoever takes her—either Yama (the god of death) or Jamai (son-in-law). Along with this saying there is another which we quoted earlier too and where we know that *dasa putra sama kanya patra bujhe dile,* means, a daughter is equal to ten sons if she is married to a suitable husband.

Sister :

The relation of the brothers and sisters is sweet and very affectionate. The joy of a married sister knows no bound when she finds her brother in her in-law's house. Addressing the brother she sings,

> O brother, you are a lion, a mountain
> But as tender as a lotus flower.[100]

*Thisel-ton-Dyer, T. F. cf. cit.

99. মেয়ের নাম ফেলী যমে নিলেও নেলি, জামাই (পরে) নিলেও নেলি।

100. Barua, Hem op. cit.

There is a saying, *dhaner tulya dhan nai jadi na pare bhula, bhaer tulya bal nai jadi na kare hinsa,*[101] which means, there is no better wealth than paddy, if there is no chaff, there is no better strength than brother if he is not jealous.

Tagore collected some unique *chharas* where the picture of a married sister is very nicely depicted in the following way,

gunabati bhai amar man keman kare
ae mashta thak didi kende kakiye
o masete neye jabo palki sujeye
har halo bhaja bhaja mash halo dari
ai re ai nadir jale jhap diya pari[102]

It means, O the talented brother of mine, I am feeling very much uneasy, O dear sister please stay there for this month suffering all the hardships, in the next month I will come to you with decorated palanquin and will take you cordially. My bone is becoming scorched and my flesh is getting ravine. Please do come or let me jump into the river. Because of brotherly affection and love a sister makes a ceremony which is known as *bhratridwitiya* where a sister prays for the longer life of her brothers. In this function they put *tilak* on the forehead of brothers with sandal-wood paste; when they put the *tilak* they recite

Swarge sankha dhwani, manche jokar, bone bhai ke fota dei,
bhai na jaio jamer duar, jamer dakshin duar,
jam duare diya fota jam gharet baira kata, bhaidwitiare dilam phota[103]

101. ধানের তুল্য ধন নাই, যদি না থাকে বুলা,
ভাইয়ের তুল্য বল নাই, যদি না করে হিংসা।
মায়ের পেটের ভাই, কোথায় গেলে পাই।
ভাইয়ের তুল্য মিত্র নাই, ভাইয়ের তুল্য শত্রু নাই।
আয় তই তই তই বিন্নি ধানের খই,
ভাই আসছে ভইনের লাগ্যা চলতি ঘোড়া লই।
বাপ রাজা তো ঝিয়ের কি? ভাই রাজা তো বোনের কি?
দাদা থাকলে রাজবাড়ী দাদা না থাকলে শুধু বাড়ী।
দাদা যে মরল তাতে ভাবি না, মরে যে বাড়ী চিনল।

102. গুণবতী ভাই আমার মন কেমন করে—
এ মাসটা থাক দিদি কেঁদে ককিয়ে,
ও মাসেতে নিয়ে যাবো পাল্কি সাজিয়ে।
হাড় হল ভাজা ভাজা মাস হল দড়।
আয় রে আয় নদীর জলে ঝাঁপ দিয়ে পড়ি।
(রবীন্দ্র সংগ্রহ)

103. স্বর্গে শঙ্খের ধ্বনি মর্ত্যে জোকার
বোন্ ভাইকে ফোঁটা দেয়।

it means there is sound of conch in the heaven and the sound of *ulu* (made by women with their tongue on sacred ceremonies and occasions) a sister puts a dot (a sacred mark) on the forehead of her brothers. O brothers please do not go to the death's south door. By this sacred dot I have caused impediment to death's door and you won't be able to cross that because I have put forth a sacred dot on the date of *Bhatridwitia* (second lunar day of Kartik). This is a popular rite that is practiced for a long life of the brothers in both the folk and urban societies.

III

Career :

All these speak of her sympathy for the human being. From this sympathy she has developed her finer tastes. She cultivates fine arts and crafts, music, dance, drama and makes artistic creations. Music and dancing form principle indoor games for the womenfolk. Girls used to play a number of courtyard games like 'hide and seek' and 'run and catch' which gave them good physical exercises. The cultivation of fine arts, paintings were encouraged. Not infrequently maidens used to give a dance in the court before a select audience.

The tradition of giving military training to girls continued in royal families, who were ruling over a considerable part of India during the 17th and 18th centuries.[104] The example of Rani Lakshmibai of Jhanshi, who excited the admiration eyes of her opponents by her remarkable bravery and sound generalship is noteworthy. Again it is well known that since the discovery of agriculture by women they used to take active part in agriculture. They also took part in the manufacture of bows, arrows, and other war materials. Samhitas refer to female workers who were conversant with dying, embroidery, basket-making and such kind of activities. Women in the lower strata of

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ভাই যাইও না যমের দক্ষিণ দোয়ার —
যম দোয়ারে দিয়া কোঁটা, যম ঘরত বাইড়া কাঁটা,
ভাই দ্বিতিয়ারে দিলাম ফোঁটা। (বাংলার লোক সাহিত্য)

প্রতিপদে দিয়া ফোঁটা, দ্বিতীয়াতে দিয়া নিতা
আজ হতে ভাই আমার যমের ঘরে নিমের অধিক তিতা।
ঢাক বাজে ঢোল বাজে আরও বাজে কাড়া,
বোনের ফোঁটা না দিয়ে ভাই না যেও যম পাড়া।
না যেও যমের ঘর—
আজ হতে ভাই আমার রাজ রাজেশ্বর।
যমুনা দেয় যমকে ফোঁটা
আমি দেই আমার ভাইকে ফোঁটা
ভাইয়ের কপালে দিলাম ফোঁটা
যম দুয়ারে পড়লো কাঁটা। (বাংলার পল্লীগীতি)

104. Altekar, A. S. op. cit

society always take part in different production work. They also take part in weaker works in factories, building construction and the like works.

Teaching career was very common and is popular in the modern days also. Medical career was selected by some women which has now become very popular. Among the works translated into Arabic in the 8th century A.D. there was one midwifery book written by a Hindu lady whose name appears as Rasa in the Arabic grab. Lady doctors in the past, like those in the modern age, seem to be usually specialising in midwifery and nursing. Some women also served as personal attendants, door-keepers, guards and hair dressers in royal courts when the modern women are seen in the offices, factories, politics and policy-making bodies. When temples were built and endowed on a magnificent state, some people began to feel in course of time, that there should be singing girls attached to shrines. The introduction of dancing girls in temples tended to lower their moral and spiritual atmosphere. Some people began to visit shrines not so much to pay their respects to the deities, as to carry on their love intrigues with the singing girls employed there. In several parts of India big temples had attached to them 'dedicated' women who performed a variety of task : they sang and danced before the deity on certain occasions, performed certain routine works and menial tasks in the temple, and looked after the comfort of pilgrims, sometime even catering to their sexual needs. Indian public opinion was roused against these temple servants who were called *devadasi* in the first decade of this century. It is necessary to remember that the Bombay Devdasi Prevention Act X of 1934 and the Madras Devdasi (Prevention of Dedication) Act of 1947 declared this institution illegal as a measure to honour public opinion.

It is well-known that the general position and status of women were changing from age to age, and so naturally the attitude of society towards them could not remain static. We have, therefore to note and take into account the changes and attitude of society to that. Perhaps one of he best way to ascertain the attitude of society would be to look into the conflicts and struggles. These will also provide the angle of vision towards women overtaken by the misfortune of falling in the hands of ruffians or enemies. Such a situation is the real touchstone to test the genuiness of society's sympathy towards the weaker sex ; it enables us to find out how far man is prepared to raise above the prejudices of his sex and judge the women by an equitable standard.

Social conflicts :

Let us come to conflicts and quarrels that arose from social,

economic and religious problems. A Hindu girl, on marriage, passes from her father's house to that of her husband. There she comes into contact with persons who do not know her and whom she does not know. There is the possibility of conflict between her and her elders in point of habits, beliefs, faiths, culture and ideology with respect to social etiquette, dress and a number of other things. As she is expected to behave properly to add to the prestige of her father's family, and proper behaviour implies obedience to her husband, his parents and his elders, she has to give in and acquire their tastes and culture. She cannot, rather she is not expected to be assertive. The usual pattern of behaviour between the husband and wife is that of the dominance of the former over the latter. A frequent pattern of behaviour between the daughter-in-law and mother-in-law is that of conflict. The mother-in-law, and unless the daughter-in-law is very tactful or subservient to her, her husband and others, causes great sufferings. Mother-in-law too passes from this process about which the society is very much conscious. Therefore there are advice for a daughter-in-law as to what to do and not to do. The following is noteworthy—

khatmatiye hate nari katmatiye chai
masek tiner bhitar tar sinthir sindur jai[105]

means, a woman who struts and looks dragger, within three months she loses her vermilion in hair parting (i.e. husband).

In the pattern of conflict between daughter-in-law and mother-in-law, the mother-in-law has the socially recognised dominent role. The young girl thus not only finds herself unfamiliar but is made to realise at the first opportunity the dominating roles of her husband and of her mother-in-law in the life she now begins. She is unable to understand how to adjust herself to their new demands, and her parents cannot be of any use there because of their respect for the social ideals. Under the circumstances also society does not sympathize with her.

She passes through tensions all alone and attempts to adjust herself to the situation, relying as every Hindu woman does, on the mercy of God and seeking her consolation in the philosophy of *karma*. It is necessary to say a few words about the theory of *karma*. In its different aspects it may be regarded as the law of conservation of moral values, merits and demerits of actions. In its essence it means that there is no loss of the effect of work done and that there is no happening of events to a person except as the result of his own work. *Karma*

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105. খটমটিয়ে হাটে নারী কটমটিয়ে চায়,
মাসেক তিনের ভিতর তার সিঁথির সিঁদুর যায়।

without any attachment is better than *karma* aimed at some gain. But some work is better than no work. The principle of *karma* reckons with the material or the context in which each individual is born. While it regards the past determined, it allows that the future is only conditioned. These psychological reactions are all the more great when the girl is of tender age.

This kindhearted young girl feels sorry when she is not properly understood. When she sees her mother-in-law is tyrannical and without any consideration she gets shocked, but she will have to tolerate her because of social custom. The girl is always in apprehension of her mother-in-law's whim. But there are loving mother-in-law too and about her a daughter-in-law says—

My roll of carded cotton won't finish
My thread won't break
My mother-in-law won't say
Go out to fetch water.

Again a mother-in-law who has lost her housewifery to her daughter-in-law cannot but expresses her dissatisfaction and wishes to weep. The song runs thus,

age charjan pache charjan madhye sonar bati
baur bhatdun tini tapta tate macher jhol
burir bhatdun pacha panta tate pacha ghol
baur bichana khatpalang tate pata gadi
burir bichana chera katha tate chalir gadi
chawa be de bau enichi tari halam bandi
aman iccha kare giye je kanace basi kandi.[106]

Its meaning is, in the front there are four persons and in the middle there is a golden cup (daughter-in-law). The daughter-in-law wearing a golden necklace along with the grand children is going ahead in a procession. For daughter-in-law there is hot rice and fresh fish curry while for the mother-in-law there is stale rice with rotten battermiler, the daughter-in-law has better bedstead along with couch and mattress

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106. আগে চারজন পাছে চার জন মধ্যে সোনার বাটি।
বউর ভাতডুন তিনি তপ্ত তাতে মাছের ঝোল,
বুড়ির ভাতডুন পচা পান্তা তাতে পচা ঘোল।
বউর বিছানা খাট পালঙ্ক তাতে পাতা গদি।
বুড়ির বিছানা ছেঁড়া কাঁথা তাতে ছালির গদি
ছাওয়া বে' দে' বউ এনেছি তারি হলাম বাঁদি—
এমন ইচ্ছা করে গিয়ে যে কানাচে বসে কাঁদি।

(S. K. De, Indian Folklore, 1958)

when the mother-in-law has torn *kantha* together with heap of ashes as her bedding. I (Mother-in-law) have brought daughter-in-law by giving marriage of my son to her, now I am subordinate to her. I feel like weeping sitting in a solitary place behind the house. Aiming at such a housewife there is a saying in Bengali,

bau ginni hale tar baro farfarani,
meghbhanga roddur hale jeman carcarani[107]

which means if daughter-in-law becomes mistress of the house, her hustling become awful; just as sunshine, immediately after clouds are disappeared, becomes tremendously keen. Thus it is said that *kalir bau ghar bhangani,** meaning, the daughter-in-law of today (Kali Yuga) is a disruptor of the family.

The mother-in-law cannot conceive that her own son can be hostile to her. Out of her fondness to her son she says *ki karbe pute nitya se to kanbhanganir kache jai sute,*[108] what my poor son will do, daily he lies down with his wife who poison his ears. In such a condition no human being can feel happy not to speak of a young girl of teen age. Thus in the following folksong a daughter-in-law is sending her message to her mother through a bird Kaffu :

O Kaffu, you are from my mother's side
Speak, O, speak in the courtyard of my parents
My mother will hear you
She will send my brother to take me
O what sorrowful days have come
I wish to get out of it
I wish to reach my father's house.

Then there are other types of conflicts. To a Hindu married woman vermilion spot on her forehead and hairparting is the sign of her husband's living. There are sayings by which a daughter-in-law is being abused by other members of the family perhaps for her unwillingness to do a work of her dislikings. Thus they say,

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107. বউ গিন্নী হলে তার বড় ফরফরানী,
মেঘডাকা রোদ্দুর হলে যেমন চড়চড়ানি।
* কলির বউ ঘর ভাঙানী।

108. কি করবে পুতে—
নিত্য সে তো কানভাঙানির কাছে যায় শুইতে।
নিত্যই দেখি কাঁথাকাপড় খুইতে।
একদিনও দেখলাম না পুতের কাছে শুইতে।

ke dibo chuta ki dibo chuta, bhasur merche gale guta[109]

means, what shall be the pretext, what shall be the pretext, it is the elder brother of my husband who has given a hit at my check. Since it is a taboo even to talk to him for the wife of a younger brother, not to speak of touch, it is a great offence for a man to touch the cheek of his younger brother's wife. In another saying we know that how economic condition of a family is a factor in maintaining irregular relations even among the dearest kins.

samaye sab hai bou bhagna bhai, gharer stri apan nai
jakhan hate paisa nai or *abhabe nat jamai bhatar*[110]

It means, in good season, sister, nephew and brothers everybody pretend to be dearest and nearest but during adversity even the wife of one is not his own. Again, in need the husband of a granddaughter is equal to one's own husband. Further, seeing the goodluck of a neighbouring girl others do not hesitate to say *sakaleito meye keu jachche palki chare keu rayeche cheye,*[111] means, all of us are women but some ride in palanquin while others look along. Following is a song where a different picture of a daughter-in-law who being grieved has left her husband's place to her parent's home can be had—

Without a nose ring, I'll not go, I'll not go
To fetch me, first of all, came my father-in-law
I'll not go, I'll not go,
The mother-in-law has been turned out,
May be to fetch me, thereafter, came my beloved.
I'll not go, I'll not go.
He tells me hundreds of platitudes
May be. Without a nose ring. I'll not go, I'll not go.

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109. কি দেব ছুতা, কি দেব ছুতা,
ভাসুর মেরেছে গালে গুতা।
এক যে ছিল পেরত্তের বউ কবাটের আড়ে,
নাচতে নাচতে পড়ল গিয়ে ভাসুরের ঘাড়ে।
বউ হয়েছে রঙের বিবি ভাসুর মানে না।

110. সময়ে সব হয় বউ ভাগনা ভাই,
ঘরের স্ত্রী আপন নয়, যখন গ্যাটে পয়সা নাই।
অভাবে নতে জামাই ভাতার,
সেই মামা সেই মামী পুকুর পাড়ে ঘর
তখন মামী ভাত চাইলে হাঁড়ি কড়কড়।
সেই মামা সেই মামী পুকুর পাড়ে ঘর
এখন মামী ভাত কেন গো দিয়ে সয়সয়। (কল্যাণী দত্ত, —ব. সা. প. প.)

111. সকলেই তো মেয়ে
কেউ যাচ্ছে পাল্কী চড়ে কেউ রয়েছে চেয়ে।

Then there is a saying, *bura hali tabu na gelo thant, rar haye jeno sarer nat,*[112] you have grown old, but have not yet left of coquetishness, you are a widow, but you roam freely as a Brahmi bull.

Another picture is depicted in the following song. Here it is seen that how the wife of the elder brother usually reacts when she is approached by her *devar* at a time when her husband is absent.

Slightly he twisted my fingers in the night
And woke me up
O parrot, in the night he woke me up
dur dur said I
It is a cat or a dog or a sinner that has opened the door.
Not a cat nor a dog, never has a sinner opened the door
It is Nandlal, your devar, bhabiji, who has opened door.
Come, you may Babu, but go and sleep on your brother's cot
Not there bhabiji, there are mosquitos which will eat me up.
With you will I sleep. I will sleep happily on your cot.
Not here, not here Babu, there are sharp knives on my cot
And here is deadly she-cobra which will take your life.
How then bhabiji does my brother save his life
Great is the magic of your brother, Babu powerful is his spell
It is through that he saves his life,
O parrot, his magic makes his cot his own.[113]

Another very interesting song can also be quoted that depicts the relation between a husband and wife who have entered into married life by their own initative. It is a Gambhira folk song of Maldaha. Here the conflict between the husband and wife is clear. The conflict is all the more painful because the couple engaged in family life through love-marriage. This also speaks of economic hardship of the family owing to unemployment problem. The song goes thus

Stri— *love-marriage kare sarajivan dhare*
jale marlam hai
Asfalan tar sove ki jar akti paisar
murad nai

Wife— Alas ! for luck ! by love marriage I have caused acute pain and sufferings all through my life.

তোদের হলুদ মাখা গা,
তোরা রথ দেখতে যা।
আমরা পয়সা কোথায় পাব,
আমরা উল্টোরথে যাবো।

112. বুড়া হলি তবু না গেল ঠাট, রাঁড় হয়ে যেন ষাঁড়ের লাট
113. Folklore, Calcutta.

Is it befitting to outburst for him who has no capacity in earning even a paise!

Swami— *a katha bhaboni takhon*
biye karechile jakhon
basai dakiye chithi pathaiye (kato)
prem nibedan
tomar tore bap ma chere
amar eman dasha hai

Husband—Ah! why did not you consider this when exasperated me for immediate marriage
By calling me at home, by sending letter after letter why you were so active in courting for love?
I have left my parents due to you which is the reason for the present wretched condition of mine

Stri— *hujur bale dakbe amare*
chalbe hukum tamil kare
edik-odik challe dibo chakri khatam kare
takhan to to kare marbe ghure
khabe ki balo akhar chhai

Wife— You will call me Madam and will carry out all my orders. I will discharge you from your service if you move to-and-fro when you will ramble aimlessly. If I do so what else you will take other than eating the ashes from the fire-place

Swami— *Sarkare jai balihari a juge amara i anari*
purusate pai nako kaj chakri pai nari
era chere hanri, dulie sari
sab kaja i dakhal karte chai

Husband—Bravo, the Government
In this age we (the men) are awkard
A male is unable to procure a job,
but there are attractive openings for the womenfolk
Giving up cooking pot and by shaking *sari* they (the women) want to capture all employments

Stri— *Sakti rupini nari*
English chanel dichchi pari
Hati nei buke Reba Rakshite
dekha bahaduri
ei desher latsaheb nari
aro kato praman chai

Wife— Women are all powerful,
They can cross the English Channel
Miss Reba Rakshit can put an elephant on her breast,
See the valour. The governor of this state (West Bengal —Miss Padmaja Naidu) is also a lady, what more examples do you need.

Swami— *amar mato acho jara bekar*
age karte sekho rojgar
tarpar love marriage karo naile
bhabisyat andhakar
strir rojgarer bhorsha korle amar
dasha habe hai

Husband—Oh those who are unemployed like my humbleself try to earn first and then make courtship or your future will be as dark as mine.
If you depend on the earnings of your wife
Your fate will be no better than mine.

Stri— *etokal chele upare*
naniyeche swadhin sarkare
sashan garjan cholbe na aar patnir upare
bhalo na lagile jabo chale
patir moder abhob nai

Wife— So long you (the malefolk) were on the top
The national government has pulled you down
No more command to a wife will henceforth be tolerated.
If we are not satisfied with their dealings and behaviours, we will divorce our husbands, we have no want of husbands.

Inspite of all these there are great demands for sweet relations between husband and wife, between *bhabiji* and *nanad* and between the mother-in-law and daugther-in-law. Thus, it is said in a Bengali proverb, *daler madhye musuri, manuser madhye sasure,** meaning, among the pluses, Musuri and among the human being, it is Sasuri, (mother-in-law) is most welcome. In the like way a husband is fond of his sister-in-law. He says, *deber madhye kali, manuser madhye shali,*** Kali among the gods and goddesses and Shali (sister-in-law) among the relatives are charming. The wife of the people of this temparament wants, *tak jhal ar kara bhatar mag bale ai chai amar,**** sour, pungent and strict husband, the wife says I want all these.

---

* ডালের মধ্যে মধ্যে মুসুরী মানুষের মধ্যে শাশুরীগী

** দেবের মধ্যে কালী মানুষের মধ্যে শালী

*** টক ঝাল আর কড়া ভাতার, মাগ বলে এই চাই আমার।

NOTES AND NEWS

In Hindu religion, it is a belief, commonly shared by the tribals of different areas, that it is only the body which is destructible and not the soul which remains immortal. They also believe that to aquire a human body the soul has to pass through a complete life-death-cycle aquiring bodies of eighty four lakhs creatures one after another. The soul can attain 'moksna'—its ultimate goal and can make itself free from this life-death-cycle only after it has possessed by a human body and only if that human body does good deeds and aquires unusual wisdom. In case the soul does not attain *moksha* it has to pass through the complete cycle to aquire human body.

Among the Gonds, for instance, this world is compared with a dark room with eighty four lakhs chambers each chamber representing body of a creature. The dark room has only one door. To attain *'Moksha'* the soul, like a blind man passes through each chamber (i.e. aquires body). By sacrificing animals, tribals believe that they facilitate the process of attaining 'Moksha' as it enables the soul to aquire, human body in a shorter period of time and it is only through the human body that soul can do good deeds and attain unsual knowledge that may lead it to the 'Moksha'. The Gonds, however, consider human sacrifice as the greatest sin because sacrificing human body means depriving the soul of doing good deeds and aquiring knowledge and hence, depriving the soul of attaining 'Moksha'. In that case the soul again will have to pass through the complete life-death-cycle comprising of eighty four lakhs creatures. —A. P. Mangla.

* * * * * *

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* * * * * *

Sri R. C. Mehta, Professor and Head, Department of Music, M. S. University, Baroda is busy to collect materials for India's. Who's Who of researches in folksongs and folk music. The following particulars are needed by him

(1) Full name (2) Address (3) Age (4)Education (5) Details about present post and profession or occupation. (6) Field of Specialization. (7) Author (Books and Outstanding Research papers mentioning language). (a) Title, (b) Language, (c) Date of Publication, (d) Name of Publisher, (e) Price, (8) Any other relevant data separately. Forms will be supplied by him on demand.

BOOKS REVIEW

A POLYGLOT OF FOREIGN PROVERBS comprising French, Italian, German, Dutch, Spanish, Portuguise and Danish, with English Translations by Henry G. Bohn, London, 1857. Republished by Gale Research Company, Detroit, Demy 580 pages, 1968, $ 14.50.

We would all profit by Bohn's admirable work that speak for itself It is arranged alphabetically under countries much of which are common to Indian languages and dialects and a scholar of Indian proverbology would be much benefitted by reading it since it will open a new way of research.

The author included a 175 pages index that not only quickly directs the reader to particular proverbs but also is invaluable for comparative study.

A comparative linguist himself, the author, attained maximum accuracy by having the proverbs of each language read over by a native of the country. In his preface the author wrote "A task so various and complicated could not well be executed without aid, nor do I pretend to be master of all the languages included. Accordingly, I sought assistance of competent scholars...." Certainly what is included in the book is well handled. Henry Bohn fishes with a valiantly long pole and has chosen what he considers to be his prize catches. It is an excellent work for what it represents. What is here is good so it deserves its place in every library.

—Shibnarayan Kabiraj

OBSCURE RELIGIOUS CULTS, by Sashibhusan Dasgupta, 1946, 3rd Edn. by Firma K. L. Mukhopadhayay, Demy, 136 pages, Calcutta-12, 1969, (Price not mentioned).

The book under review is third edition of Dr. Dasgupta's Ph. D. dissertation of the Univtrsity of Calcutta where he was the Ramtanu Lahiri Professor and Head of the Dept. of Modern Indian Languages till he faces his immature death. This book has attained him a world recognition as one of the first rate scholar of India.

The book has four parts with 5 Appendices. The first part deals with the Buddhist Sahajia Cult, the second part deals with the Medieval Sahajia Schools, the third part deals with the Nath Cult and part four deals with the Dharma Cult and the Bengali literature. Although a number of new publications have appeared on similar or allied subjects during the last 23 years or on such topics that are dealt with by the author, and inspite of their throwing some new lights on different points and supplying new information "they do not assail the

views held and explained in this book" writes author in the preface of the second edition. The author could not write a preface in the third edition because it appeared after his death. This is a most valuable book on the subject and it deserves to be read by all advanced students.

—Samir Ghosal

THE NAGAS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, Verrier Elwin, Oxford Univ. Press, 1969, Demy 650 Pages, Rs. 42.50.

While introducing the book Dr. Elwin writes— "A few years ago I made an anthology of extracts from the nineteenth century books and articles, now rare and only available in larger libraies, about the North East Frontier of India....Here I have extracted passages about the Naga people on a broad geographical basis.....covering a period 1827 to 1896. ... Although at no time did I hold an official position in the Naga areas, my knowledge of the Nagas is not confined to books.." Unfortunately he could not see printed book in his life time. It is N. K. Rustomji, an ICS officer and a long associate of Dr. Elwin, who has completed the editing and has also written a foreword. He writes forewording the book that "Verrier Elwin had shown me, and we had often discussed, the manuscript of this anthology while it was under preparation." So after Elwin's death "I was happy to accept Mrs. Elwin's and the Oxford University Press's request to tie up the loose ends and prepare it for publication—which meant little more than crossing the t's, dotting the i's, rummaging for suitable illustrations and, where the text was obscure, exploring the original sources."

The book has altogether 115 articles which is divided into seventeen chapters. The first chapter has 8 articles which is named as the Country of the Nagas, second to seventeen chapters have six, two, fifteen, five, two, three, three, one, three, three, five, nine, six, nine, nineteen and sixteen articles respectively in the following heads —The Nagas : A General Review, Some Aspects of Naga History, Early Tours Among the Nagas, The Angani Nagas, The Ao Nagas, The Lohta Nagas, The Rengma Nagas, The Sema Nagas, The North-Eastern Nagas, The Nagas of Cacher, The Nagas of Manipur, Naga Religion. Some Naga Customs and Traditions, Head Hunting and War, Development and Miscellaneous Notes. Necessary to note that all writers represented in the book under review are not anthropologists and their enquiry is not strictly scientific. But from their records emerge valuable descriptions of the history, ethnography and problems of the people. It covers the field with a convenient degree of adequacy. No student of Tribal affairs can afford to miss it.

—S. S. G.

WOMEN IN INDIAN FOLKLORE, Edited with and introduction by Sankar Sen Gupta, Foreword by Smt. Indira Gandhi, Inidan Publications, Calcutta-1, D/crown, 62+326 pages, 1969, Rs. 45/-.

It is book number sixteen of Indian Publications Folklore Series where besides a long and scholarly introduction, twenty-six articles from twenty-six scholars of different parts of the country have been included. The book purports to present both in theory and practice the social position, status and the influence of womankind. In it, women's characterstics, tastes, loves, secrets, curiosity, etc. have been treated taking the help of oral traditional materials. Women's character etc. can never be defined in strict terms but a study of such papers as included in the book under review will reveal in no uncertain terms that the more one learns of women, the more one becomes conscious of the basic limitations of his knowledge about the womankind. In her foreword, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India, asks 'How is it possible to describe the role of women in a society ?' She also points out that "In the epics one finds women who were examples of courage and daring. In classical literature they become more decorative and even anaemic and were assigned the place of conservers, not innovators But in the folk literature one finds them full of life..... This book gives a picture of the Indian Women as mother, moulder, and home-maker." In it Tamil Women. Women of Eastern Pakistan, Jain Women, Women of Assam, Marathi Women, Women of Rajasthan, Punjabi Women, Women of Buddhist Society, Women of Gujarat, Bengali Women, Oriya Women, Telugu Women, Nair Women, Women in Hindi dialects and folk songs—Magahi, Bhojapuri, etc., Sikh Women, Hindu and Muslim Women etc. are discussed as they are depicted in the customs and traditions of the respective communities. What makes this book both unusual and all the more valuable for those who not only want to feast their eyes but also wish to understand the position of women in different roles of their lives is that it is a comprehensive and critical survey which seeks to interpret women from a new angle and which is also an attempt for the re-orientation of folklore. We are glad to note that Sj. Sankar Sen Gupta, the famous and diligent folklorist of India has brought to bear his expert knowledge and advanced thinking upon the subject.

—B. N. Shastri

JUST PUBLISHED

VIHARAS IN ANCIENT INDIA—A Survey of Buddhist Monesteries by Dr. D. K. Barua M.A. Dip lib, D. Phil. P.R.S., Lecturer in Pali C. U. Demy 264 pages, Rexin bound, Rs. 25.00

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FOLKLORE December, 1969
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SANTIBHAI ACHARYA

A BHILI TALE : TOM TOM TOM

THERE was a Mongoose. It was walking along a hedge. Meantime, it pricked with a thorn. Then the Mongoose went to a barber and said "O, brother barber, O, brother barber," "What do you want?" the barber replied. "I have been pricked with a thorn, (kindly) get it out" the Mongoose requested. "Oh yes, I will just get it out" replied the barber. Then the barber drew the thorn out pulling from his foot and threw it out. Afterwards the Mongoose said "O, brother barber, give me the thorn back. The barber replied that the thorn was lost. On hearing this the Mongoose said "give me my thorn back otherwise I would flee taking your razor" (saying so he fled with barber's razor).

When the Mongoose was going further with the razor, (he saw that) carpenters were designing—Cavru,—a part of wooden plough which enters into the soil—by their teeth. On seeing this the Mongoose asked (to them) "Why you are fashioning (this) Cavru by teeth? the carpenters. And they took up the razor. While working it has broken. The Mongoose said"give me my razor." "Your razor has been broken" replied the carpenters. The Mongoose said again "give (me my) razor or I would go away your Cavru with me. (And he went carrying that Cavru). When he walked further he saw that an old woman was roasting breads burning her hands and feet. Seeing this the Mongoose said "O, old woman, why do you roast breads burning your hands and feet? (Please) look at my heavy Cavru." "Let me burn it" the old woman said. Saying so she took the Cavru and burnt it. Then the Mongoose said "give me my Cavru (bock)." "It is (already) burnt" the old woman replied. The Mongoose said again "give my Cavru back otherwise I would run away carrying your breads." And he fled with breads.

On his way again the Mongoose saw that a potter was eating Gar, while prepairing a mixture of earth, water, etc., for making earthen pots Gar. The Mongoose said to him. "O, potter, why you are eating Gar while fashioning pots?" Look at my fresh bread." and tast it.

The potter said "let me eat it." And the potter ate the whole bread. Then the Mongoose said to the potter "give my bread back otherwise I would run away taking your earthen pot" and did so.

When he was walking further carrying that pot, he found that cowherds were preparing and eating Khir,—a milk dish—in a pot made of leaves of tree akerjjo (calotropis gigantea) sewn togather. The Mongoose said to them "O, cowherds, why do you prepare and eat Khir in a pot made of leaves of the tree akarjjo? Just see my beautiful earthen pot." The cowherds replied "let us cook Khir in it" and took the pot. Then they said to him "Mongoose, you please collect our cattle (which are grazing scattered) riding on a male buffalo". Thus Mongoose was driven out for collecting cattle. When the Mongoose disappeared the cowherds prepared Khir in the pot and eating hurridely they thrown out the pot breaking into pieces. The Mongoose returned shortly and said to the cowherds "give me my pot back". "Somebody has broken your pot" the cowherds replied. The Mongoose said again "give me my pot back otherwise I would run away taking this male buffalo" (and he fled taking that male buffalo).

When he was going further with that male buffalo, he saw that a marriage party was passing—(looked like) hungry and thursty. The Mongoose approached the party and said "O men of marriage party, why do you go hungry? Just see my flashy male buffalo. Would you like to eat it?" The party took the buffalo, killed it and ate-up.

When they finished the whole stuff the Mongoose came back and said to them "give my male buffalo back otherwise I would run away taking your bride". Saying so the Mongoose ran away taking the bride. While he was proceeding further taking the bride with him, he found another marriage party passing but a bride. The Mongoose approached and said to that party "Why you are returning without a bride? See, I have a beautiful bride with me". The party took up the bride and went away. Then the Mongoose said "give my bride back to me otherwise I would go away your drum," saying so it took the drum scrips this hill to that hill singing.

A Mongosse was passing along a hedge, had a thron pricked;
giving up that thron he took a razor tom tom tom
giving razor he took a cavru tom tom tom
giving cavru he took a bread tom tom tom
giving bread he took an earthenpot tom tom tom.
giving earthen pot he took a male buffalo tom tom tom
giving male buffaloo he took a bride tom tom tom
giving bride he took a drum tom tom tom
Then? This hill to that hill tom tom tom tom.

Tribal Research Institute, Gujarat, Ahmedabad.

PURNIMA SINHA

FOLK CLASSICAL CONTINUUM IN INDIAN MUSIC

(Continued from October issue)

II. KARAM SONGS

Now we pass on to *Karam* songs catered to a multi-ethnic and larger audience. These songs represent a phase of cultural development in the region later to that represented by the tribal *Sarhul* songs. There are two distinct types of Karam Songs with distinct types of tunes. The following tune is sung by a group of people who are comparatively recent settlers in the area who came from the West i.e., Bihar region.

Specimen No. 5

Word theme :

Gara dhora gara dhora
Dumuri pakia gel
Oh ho re jamu re baide
Jamu baide gaya re gothai

Translation :

In the broken uplands,
The figs are already ripe,
O, there, there in the low *jamu* land,
The cattles have gathered together!

Notation :

The song is complete in 4 lines divided in groups of 6 beats divided as 2/2/2/2/

1.	C	D	D	F	F	—	E	E	E	D	D	S
	S	R	R	M	M	—	Ga	Ga	Ga	R	R	C
	Ga	ra	dho	.	ra	.	ga	ra	dho	.	ra	.
2.	C	D	D	—	E	D	C	D	C	—	—	—
	S	R	R	—	Ga	R	S	R	S	—	—	—
	Du	mu	ri	.	pa	.	ki	a	ge	.	.	l
3.	F	—	E	—	D	—	C	D	D	—	E	D	G	D	C	—	—	
	M	—	Ga	—	R	—	S	R		—	Ga	R	S	R	S	—	—	—
	Oh	.	ho	.	re	.	ja	.	mu	.	re	.	ba	i	de	.	.	.
4.	C	D	D	F	F	—	E	E	D	E	D	—	C	—	—	—	—	—
	S	R	R	M	M	—	Ga	Ga	R	Ga	R	—	S	—	—	—	—	—
	ja	mu	ba	i	de	.	gay	a	re	.	go	.	tha	.	.	.	.	i

Distribution of the notes in the different lines:

TABLE 7
N.V

note→ line. ↓	S	R	G	M		S+G	R+M	
1.	2	4	3	3	12	5	7	
2.	6	5	1	0	12	7	5	
3.	6	7	3	2	18	6	7	in 12 beats
4.	4	5	3	3	18	7	5	
Total	21	21	10	8	60			

Gaar dhore
TABLE 8

N.V	C.V.N	C.L.V.	V.U.	C.V.U.		C.V Mifhuna—Matrika	
S — 21	S R		SGP—31 RMD—29	SGP DSG	50%	DSG-SGP	SGPD 50%
R — 21	G		nRM—29	RMD MDS		RMD-MDS	SRMD —83%
G — 10	M		MDS—29 DSG—31	nRM			
M — 8		60x.4 =24					
Total 60				Scale—SRGM (P) (D) (n)			

From table 7 we again find that combinations related by anubad SG and RM has a correspondence with rhyming of the word theme.

In this song we find that the combined value of R and M is 29 which exceeds C.L.V. (Table 8). Therefore D and n are virtually present and the presence of the *Khandamerus* RMD and nRM are assumed. SGPD is again the dominant Matrika which has a value 50% of the total value. But the second *Matrika* SRMD has a value 83% of the total value which is much greater than that of the dominant Matrika. But the value of the individual notes of the *Matrika* could not raise the value of the component *Khandamerus* RMD or MDS to the position of the dominant *Khandameru*. We shall regard SGPD as the dominant *Matrika*

paying due weightage to the predominance of the *Khandamerus* DSG and SGP. The *Mithuna* nRM-RMD has an equal claim to from the 2nd *Matrika* RMDn, but it has a value 48% of the total value, which is less than that of SRMD. The value of a subdominant *Matrika* may in some cases be a little greater than the value of the dominant *Matrika* even in cases of Kheyal themes (Sanyal 1959 : 54, 117). But the large difference in value observed in sample 5 would probably be infrequent in Kheyal themes. Since the songs under consideration are very primitive and have not developed systematically, they may not fit perfectly with a standard model set up on the basis of analysis of samples belonging to systematised music. A confusion in classification is created due to reversal of value between the 1st and the 2nd *Matrika*. In this song 'n' appears as an extra latent note thus the scale becomes SRGM (P) (D) (n) with 4 manifest and three latent or virtual notes.

As it is, the *Khandamerus* DSG and SGP definitely occupy the dominant position. But we notice that if one 'G' is replaced by a 'M' all the *Khandamerus* would have crowded together in the same position and it would have been impossible to come to a decision regarding the predominance between the *Matrikas* (a) SGPD, (b) SRMD, (c6 RMPn. The song avoids such a confusion by an equisite balance. Still we shall assume that exchanging one 'G' and 'M' would not have caused much change in the nature of the song and thus classify the song as a border line sample where a strong decision about emphasis has not been attained. This, of course does not affect the emotional appeal of the song. In this song the strength of R+M indicates the virtual presence of 'n'. This the scale is extended in comparison to the previous songs. and becomes SRGM (P) (D)n. This scale has the possibility of developing the Ragas of the *Khambaj* Group.

An alternative may also be suggested in assigning the dominant *Matrika* of specimen 5. Since the latent note 'D' completes the Khandamerus (D) SG and M (D) S. and RM (D), satisfying the demand of the pairs SG, MS, and RM appearing explicitly in the song to complete the required triplets, we may exclude the note 'P' from the list of latent notes. In that case the sequence of the *Matrikas* will be (1) SGMD 2) SRMD. This combination appears in a *raga* name *Behari* (Sanyal 1959 : 168). The tune also resembles a common motif prevalant in Bihar.

The following type of song is the earlier and more prevalent form of Karam Songs.

Specimen No. 6

Word theme :

Kurchi Phul, Kurchi Phul
Phute agey ag lo
Biti chhayer durey biha
Khanchhey ontor
Bap kande hate batey
Ma kande Ghate lo
Sokoli songotee kande
Dhulate lutaye.

Baper ghor ucho ucho
Sosur ghor nicha lo
Kia dekhi bape biha dil
Tori kopal biti
Hameri nojor lo
Jamai dekhe
Hame biha dil.

Translation :

Kurchi flowers bloom
All the way ahead
Our daughter is married to a distant land
My heart is weeping
The father is crying in the market place
The mother is crying at the Ghat
All the playmates are weeping
lying in the dust.

My father's home is high
My father-in-law's home is low
Why did my father marry me here ?
It is your fate oh daughter
And my eyes deceived me
I was charmed by the bridegroom.

Notation :

1	G	—	G	—	F	—	G	—	G	—	F	—		
	P	—	P	—	M	—	P	—	P	—	M	—		
	Kur	.	chi	.	Phu	1	Ku	r	chi	.	phu	1.		

2	F	G	—	F	G	—	F	—	F	E	—	—
	M	P	—	M	P	—	M	—	M	Ga	—	—
	Phu	te	.	a	gey	—	a	.	g	lo	.	.
3	C	C	—	D	E	—	C	C	—	E	E	—
	S	S	—	R	Ga	—	S	S	—	Ga	Ga	—
	Bi	ti	.	chha	ye	r	du	re	.	bi	.	.
4	F	—	—	G	G	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
	M	—	—	P	P	—	M	—	—	—	—	—
	Ka	.	n	chhe	on	.	to	.	.	.	.	r
5	G	—	G	G	G	—	A	B^b	—	A	G	—
	P	—	P	P	P	—	Da	n	—	Da	P	—
	Ba	.	P	Kan	de	.	ha	tey	.	ba	tey	.
6	F	—	—	G	G	—	F	F	—	E	—	—
	M	—	—	Pa	Pa	—	M	M	—	Ga	—	—
	Ma	.	.	Kan	de	.	gha	tey	.	lo	,	.
7	C	C	—	D	E	—	C	C	—	E	E	—
	S	S	—	R	Ga	—	S	S	—	Ca	Ga	—
	So	ko	—	li	so	ng	o	ti	.	kan	de	.
8	F	F	—	G	G	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
	M	M	—	P	P	—	M	—	—	—	—	—
	Dhu	la	.	te	lu	.	ta	.	.	.	.	ye

TABLE 9

	N.V.													
Note→ line ↓	S	R	G	M	P	D	n	Total	SGP	MDS	RMD	nRM	PnR	DSG
1	0	0	0	4	8	0	0	12	8	4	4	4	8	0
2	0	0	3	5	4	0	0	12	7	5	5	5	4	0
3	6	1	5	0	0	0	0	12	11	6	1	1	0	11
4	0	0	0	9	3	0	0	12	3	9	9	9	3	3
5	0	0	0	0	8	2	2	12	8	2	2	2	10	2
6	0	0	3	6	3	0	0	12	6	6	6	2	3	2
7	6	1	5	0	0	0	0	12	11	6	1	1	0	11
8	0	0	0	9	3	0	0	12	3	9	2	9	3	3
Total	12	2	16	33	29	2	2	96	57	47	37	36	33	30

TABLE 10

Kurchi Phul

N.V.	C.V.N.	V.K.	C.V.K.	Mithuna	C.V Matrika
S—12	M	SGP—57	SGP 60%	(DSG-SGP)	SGPD —61%
R— 2	P	RMD —37	MDS 49%	(RMD MDS)	SRMD 51%
G—16	G	MDS—47	RMD	(Pnr-nRM)	RMPn 68%
M—33	S	PnR—33	nRM		
P—29		DSG—30	PnR		
D— 2		nRM—37	DSG		
n— 2					
Total 96				Scale : SRGMPDn	

The notes 'P' 'D' and 'n' assumed to be virtually present in the previous songs appear explicitly in this song, stabilising the scale SRGMPDn, which has the possibility of developing Ragas of Khambaj group. The order of the *Khandamerus* are distinctly defined. The order of the *Matrikas* are also definite, SGPD being the dominant *Matrika*. But in this case too, the Matrika RMPn, which comes third in position has a slightly higher value than that of the dominant Matrika, in terms of the sum of the value of the individual notes R,M,P and n. There is an interesting correlation between the high strength of RMPn, which is known to be the dominant *Matrika* of *Megha Raga* (*Raga* of clouds) (Sanyal 1959 : 99) and the fact that the song is sung during the rainy season. But the coincidence may be accidental.

If we arrange the note values and value of the *Khandamerus*, starting from the dominant to the lowest one in each of the successive lines of the word theme (Table 6), we again notice that the value of the *Khandamerus* as well as the individual notes are rhyming liks words in a poem. From this pattern it seems that the *Khandamerus* inherent in the melodic theme may be compared with words in a poem. We notice that words in language are constructed from letters chosem arbitrarily from an almost unlimited source of sound and thus may have a wide range of combinations which may be utilised in rhyming in a poem. But in case of music, only twelve notes related by their frequency ratio with the tonic can be used to form musical words. Within these twelve notes again, the words are constructed under a rigid selection principle using the restricted set of notes related by *Sambad* and *Anubad*. It may

seem that variety in rhyming is limited in music. But actually, the limited set of *Khandamerus* inherent in a melodic theme may have a large number of distribution of duration in different sections of the theme. The same *Khandameru* with different duration acts as separate rhyming words, which can be arranged in successive lines of the theme to create the musical poem. Thus the musical words have two component: i) the notes comprising the *Khandameru*, ii) the duration of the notes. A different word is generated if either of the components is changed. Table 6 actually shows the symmetrical variation of duration of each *Khandameru* along the successive lines.

III. DANR SAILA

The following song represents the single type of tune used in the songs of the form *Danr Saila*.

Specimen No. 7

Word theme:

Andharey Jyochhnaye
Andhar korey disna
Ami lo tor chokher kajol
Joley dunye disna.

Translation:

There is darkness and Moonlight
Don't make it all dark
I am the mascara of your eye
Don't wash it away.

	*	*	F	F	F	—	G	—	—	G	—	—
	*	*	M	M	M	—	P	—	—	P	—	—
			An	dha	rey	.	joy	.	chh	na	ye	.
2	G	A	—	B^{b}	A	—	G	—	—	F	E	—
	P	Da	—	n	Da	—	P	—	—	M	Ga	—
	An	dha	r	ko	rey	.	dis	.	.	na	.	.
3	F	F	—	F	F	—	E	E	—	D	C	—
	M	M	—	M	M	—	Ga	Ga	—	R	S	—
	a	mi	—	lo	tor	.	cho	kher	.	ka	jo	l
4	D	E	—	E	D	—	C	C	—	C	C	—
	R	Ga	—	Ga	R	—	S	S	—	S	S	—
	Jo	ley	.	dhun	ye	.	dis	.	.	na	.	.

TABLE 11

N.V.	C. N. V.	V. K.	C. V. K.	C. V. Mithuna		C. V. Matrika	
S — 8	M	SGP— 26	SGP— 57%	(1) (DSG — SGP)		SGPD	65%
R — 4	P	RMD—19	MDS—50%	(2) (RMD—MDS)		SRMD	59%
G — 8	S	MDS— 23	DSG	(3) (PnR— nRM)		RMPn	57%
M—11	G	PnR— 15	RMD				
P —10	D	DSG — 20	nRM				
D — 4	n	nRM— 16	PnR				
n — 1							

Total 46 **Scale : S R G M P D n**

The scale and the dominant Matrika is the same as in the previous specimen. In this song there is no discrepancy between the position and value of the *Matrikas*. The value gradually diminish from the dominant to the subsequent *Matrikas*. But the difference between the values of the *Khandamerus* SGP and MDS is only three. An adjustment of three notes between MD and GP would shift the sequence of Matrikas to e) SGMD, f) RMDN. (Thus this specimen would also be regarded as a border line case with a possibilty of developing the set of *Matrikas* { e, f } . There seems to be some hesitation in decision about emphasis between SGPD and SGMD. The scale notes are SRGMPDn.

IV. TUSU

There are two and only two distinct types of tunes sung in Tusu festival with different kinds of word themes. One sample of each type of songs are given below :

Specimen No. 8

Word theme :

Asanboni Asanboni go
Chaler boro dor suni
Kalimatir istisaney
Kasipurer Nilmoni
Rele disna matha
Tor ma kanchhey lo bachha bachha
Rele disna matha.

Translation :

At the village Asaboni
The rice has become very dear
At Kalimati railway station,
O Nilmoni of Kasipur,
Don't place your head on the railroad
Your mother is crying, "O my child!
Don't place your head on the railroad."

Notation :

1	*	*	E	E	F	G	E	F	E	D	C	—			
	*	*	Ga	Ga	M	P	Ga	M	Ga	R	S	—			
			A	san	bo	ni	a	san	bo	ni	go	.			
2	C	C	D	E	F	G	G	F	F	—	—	—			
	S	S	R	Ga	M	P	P	M	M	—	—	—			
	cha	ler	bo	ro	do	r	su	ni	.	.	.	.			
3	E	E	F	F	F	G	E	F	E	D	C	—			
	Ga	Ga	M	M	M	P	Ga	M	Ga	R	S	—			
	Ka	li	.	ma	ti	r	i	s	ti	sa	ney	.			
4	E	F	F	F	C	C	D	E^b	D	C	B^b	A			
	Ga	M	M	Ga	S	S	R	g	R	S	n	Da			
	Ka	.	si	pu	.	rer	Ni	l	mo	ni	re	le			
5	G	—	A	B^b	C	—	—	—	—	—	E	E			
	P	—	Da	n	S	—	—	—	—	—	Ga	Ga			
	di	s	na	ma	tha	.	.	.	.	.	tor	ma			
6	E	F	F	E	D	S	D	E^b	D	C	B^b	A			
	Ga	M	M	Ga	R	S	R	g	R	S	n	D			
	Ka	n	chh	lo	.	ba	chae	.	ba	chha	re	le			
7	G	—	A	B^b	C	—									
	P	—	Da	n	S	—									
	di	s	na	ma	tha	.									

Asan boni

TABLE 12

N.V	C N V	V.K	C.V.K	C.V Mithuna Matrika
S—18	S	SgP—28	SGP—54%	(1) (DSG-SGP)—SGPD—60%
R— 9	M	SGP—41	MDS—50%	(2) (RMD-MDS)—SRMD—63%
g— 2	G	RMD—29	DSG	(3) (PnR-nRM)—RMPn—42%
G—15		gPn—14	RMD }	(4) (SgP-gPn)—SgPn—42%
M—16		MDS—38	nRM }	
P— 8		DSG—37		
D— 4		PnR—21		
n— 4		nRM—29		
Total 76				Scale S R g G M P D n

In this sample the priority of the *Khandamerus* and the *Matrikas* are distinctly defined. The sequence of the first three *Matrikas* are similar to that in the three other specimens described before. But the second *Matrika* SRMD has a value slightly greater than that of the dominant Matrika. An additional note 'g' apprears with a small value and contributes in forming the *Khandameru* SgP in the the sixth position among eight *Khandamerus*. The appearence of 'g' is not unlikely, as the mediant combination Pn appearing in the previous samples, may tend to complete the *Khandameru* gPn. An additional *Matrika* SgPn appears in the fourth position. The notes used in the scale are SRGMPDn. (The notes have the possibility of generating the *Ragas* of the group represented by both *Khambaj* and *Sindhu,* due to the presence of 'g'. But since the position of SgPn is too low compared to the other *Matrikas* the effect of 'g' is negligible. Thus the possibility of developing Ragas with 'g' in the scale like *Kafi* or *Sindhu* is low. The possibility of developing Khambaj is stronger.

Specimen No. 9

Barey barey barun kori
Baidey tola diona
Baidey tola baide roilo
Mahajoney manena
Hey urakol bajao re bansi
Amra bansi key bhalo basi
Banshi key bhalo basi.

Translation :

I asked you over and over
Not to plant the seedlings in the bed

The seedlings of the low land remained where they were
The Money lender would not listen.
O airplane, blow your horn
We love the horn.

The last two lines are added as refrain, the word theme of which may be completely unrelated with the original theme. The refrains are improvised on the spot at random.

Notation :

1
C — D | F F — | F — F | E F —
S — R | M M — | M — M | Ga M —
Ba . re | ba re . | ba . run | ko ri .

2
G — A | G F — | F — E | D E^b D
P — Da | P M — | M — Ga | R g R
Bai . de | to la . | di . o | na . .

3
C — F | F E^b — | D — C | B^b A B^b
S — M | M g — | R — S | n Da n
Bai . de | to la . | bai . de | roi lo .

4
C — D | E F G | F — E | D E^b D
S — R | Ga M P | M — Ga | R g R
Mo— ha | jo ne ye | ma . ne | na . .

5
C — F | F E^b D | $\bar{C}\bar{D}$ C — | B^b A B^b | C — —
S — M | M g R | $\bar{S}\bar{R}$ S — | n A n | S — —
Hey . u | ra ko l | ba ja o | re . ban | si . .

— E E | E E F | F — G | E E E | D E^b D
— Ga Ga | Ga Ga M | M — P | Ga M Ga | R g R
. am ra | Ban si · | ke . bha | lo . ba | si . .

C D -- | E — $\bar{F}\bar{G}$ | E F E D E^b D
S R — | Ga — $\bar{M}\bar{P}$ | Ga M Ga R g R
Ban si . | ke . bha | lo . ba | si . .

Bare Bare

TABLE 13

N.V	C.N.V	V.K	C.V.K	C.V Mithuna	Matrika
S— 16.5	M	SgP—32	MDS 50%	(1) (RMD-MDS)	SRMD 66%
R— 15 5	S	SGP—33	nRM 50%	(2) (PnR-nRM)	RMPn 56%
g— 10	R	RMD— 43.	RMD	(3) (DSG-SGP)	SGPD 40%
G—11	G	gPn—19.5	SGP	(4) (SgP-gPn)	SgPn 40%
M—24.5		MDS—44	DSG		
P—5.5		PnR—25.	SgP		
D—3		DSG—30.5	PnR		
n—4		nRM—44	gpn		
Total 90.0				Scale S R g G M P D n	

The same set of notes as the other *Tusu* specimen has been used. The priority of the *Khandamerus* and Matrikas are distinct. But unlike all other specimens described before, the *Khandameru* MDS instead of SGP occupies the first position. The sequence of the Matrikas have changed from the set a) SGPD b) SRMD c) RMPn to b) SRMD c) RMPn a) SGPD.

This is the only other prevalent form of *Tusu* sung in the area. All the songs are sung in the same same way with different word themes. Thus, the direction of the development of the change of emphasis attempted in this form of *Tusu* cannot be followed up by analysing more samples, with variation within the particular combination of *Matrikas*. In this sample the individual value of 'g' is stronger compared to that of the previous samples, but here too, 'g' does not make any major contribution to the position of a *Khanameru* or *Matrika* comprising 'g'. The scale notes are again SRg GMPDn. From only two melody types developed in Tusu form, no conclusion can be derived about the direction in which the melodic pattern tend to move as a result of the experiment with introduction of 'g' in the scale.

V. NACHNI SAILA

Now we shall describe songs of the group termed *Nachni Saila* sung by dancing girls, the most cultured and evolved music of the area. Both the word themes and melodic patterns are more complex in these songs. Also, there are many varieties of tunes.

Specimen No. 10

Word theme :

Swaponey Bidhumukhi
Heri Jadupatia

Palonko uporey Shyam
Raholo sutia
Tutilo ghumeri ghor
Heria jubatia
Ankhilore bhije chhati
Bhijolo chhatia.

Translation :

Bidhumuki saw Jadupati in a dream
She saw Shyam sleeping in her bed
Seeing the young dame, his slumber was broken
And tears trickled down his chest
His chest was all wet.

Notation :

The song is complete in 18 bars containing 6 beates each, divided as 3/3/

1	*	*	A	A	B^b	B^b	C	C	C	C	—	—
	*	*	Da	Da	n	n	S	S	S	S	—	—
	*	*	Swa	po	ney	Bi	dhu	mu	khi	.	.	.
2	*	*	G	G A B^b		A G A		B^b A G		A G P		E F —
	*	*	P	P Da n		Da P Da		n DaP		Da P M		Ga M —
	*	*	He	. ri .		Ja . du		. pa .		ti . a		. . .
3	D	E	F	G	A^b	G	E	E	G	E	D	C
	R	Ga	M	P	d	P	M	Ga	R	Ga	R	S
	Pa	.	lo	n	ko	u	po	re	shya	.	.	m
	E	E	DC	C	E	B	D	C	—	E	D	C
4	Ga	Ga	RS	S	Ga	Ga	R	S	—	Ga	R	S
	Ro	.	ho	.	lo	.	su	ti	.	.	.	a
5	*	*	A	A	A	B^b	B^b	C	C	—	—	C
	*	*	Da	Da	Da	n	n	S	S	—	—	S
	*	*	Tu	ti	lo	ghu	me	ri	gho	.	.	r
6	*	*	G	G A B^b		A G A		B^b A G		A G F		E — —
	*	*	P	P Da n		Da P Da		n Da P		Da P M		Ga — —
	*	*	He	. ri .		a . ju		. bo .		ti . a		. . .

7	*	*	F	F	F	F	G	A	G	F	E	C
	*	*	M	M	M	M	P	Da	P	M	G	S
	*	*	An	khi	lo	rey	bhi	je	.	chha	ti	.
8	E	—	C	C	E	—	D	C	C	C	—	—
	Ga	—	S	S	Ga	—	R	S	S	S	—	—
	Bhi	.	jo	.	lo	.	chha	ti	.	a	.	.

Swapone Bidhumukhi

TABLE 14

N. V	C. N. V	V. K	C. V, K	C. V	
				Muthuna	Matrika
S—27.5	S	SGP—57.5	DSP—60%	(1) (DSG—SGP)	SGPE— 75%
R— 4.5	D	RMD—31 5	SGP—58.5%	(2) (RMD-MDS)	SRMD—60%
G— 16	G	MES—54.5	MDS—55.1%	(3) (PnR—nRM)	RMPn— 39%
M—11	P	PnR—26 5			
P— 16	M	DSG—59.5			
d— 16	n	nRM—23.5	RMD		
D—16	R		PnR		
n— 8			nRM		
Total 98			Scale—S R G M P d D n		

Notation :

There is no discrepancy between the position and the value of the successive *Matrikas.* In this sample too, the sequence of Matrikas are (a) SGPD, (b) SRMD (c) RMPn. But adjustment of three notes between MD and GP would shift the design to the set of combination (e) SGMD (f) RMDn. One beat of 'd' has been introduced in the scale without contributing either to any *Khandameru* or to any *Matrika.* This song also represent a borderline case between the group represented by the set { a, b, c } and { e, f } of the *Matrikas.*

Specimen No. 11

Tui amar soru sinta
Tui golar mala gantha
Tui sadher ayna chiruni lo
Hey dhoni

Tui dhuti jama jora
Tui O paguri tera
Tui kaner pulo hey
Sojoni dhoni

Tui bhalo basa basi
Tui mukher muchki hasi
Tui chokher chonchol chahoni lo
Hey dhoni.

Ami takaye ako anna
Tui takaye solo anna
Mon banka kano chhando badani
Hey dhoni.

Translation

You are the fine parting of my hair
You are the necklace of my neck
You are my favourite mirror and comb
O pretty girl!
You are my dhoti and my shirt
You are my slanting head dress
You are the flower in my ear,
My friend, my pretty girl!
You are love itself,
You are the smile on my face,
You are the restless look in my eyes,
O pretty girl.
I am a quarter in an anna,
You are sixteen annas in a rupee,
Why is your mind turned away,
O my moon faced pretty girl?

Notation :

(The same tune is repeated with the word themes of the subsequent stanzas)

1	*	*	A	A	A	B^b	B^b	C	—	C	C	—
	*	*	Da	Da	Da	n	n	S	—	S	S	—
			Tui	a	ma	r	so	ru	.	sin	ta	.
2	F	—	G	—	A	B^b	G	A	G	F	E	—
	M	—	P	—	Da	n				M	Aa	—
	tui	.	go	.	la	r	P	Da	P	gan	tha	.

3	E	F	F	—	F	—	G	A	G	F	E	D
	G	M	M	—	M	—	P	Da	P	M	Ga	R
	tu	i	sa	.	dhe	r	a	y	na	.	chi	.
4	C	D	$\overline{CD}$	E	E	—	D	C	C	—	—	—
	S	D	$\overline{SR}$	G	G	—	R	S	S	—	—	—
	ru	.	ni	.	lo•	.	hey	dho	.	ni	.	.

Tui Amar Soru Sita

TABLE 15

N. V	C.N.V	V. K	C. V. K	C. V	
				Mithuna	Matrika
S—11.5 R—3·5 G—7 M—9 P—6 D—6 n—3	S M G	SGP— 24.5 RMD—18.5 MDS— 26-5 PnR— 12-5 DSG— 24.5 nRM— 15·5	MDS—57% DSG } 53% SGP } RMD nRM PnR	1. (MDS—DSG) 2. (nRM—RMD)	1. SGMD-72% 2. RMDn-46%

Total 46 Scale : S R G M P Dn

Specimen No. 12

Word theme :

Nayano mojilo agey
Sesey bandey dilkey
Bhangi dilo rey sokhi
Amaro dilke.

Translation :

I was charmed by the sight at first
Then my heart was bound,
Oh my friend,
My heart is broken.

Notation :

The song is complete in 8 bars, each bar containing 6 beats divided as 3/3/

1	$\dot{C}$	$\dot{C}$	—	$\dot{C}$	$\dot{C}$	—	B^b	A	—	G	F	—
	$\dot{S}$	$\dot{S}$	—	$\dot{S}$	$\dot{S}$	—	n	Da	—	P	M	—
	Na	ya	.	no	mo	—	ji	lo	.	a	gey	.

	G	A	A	A	G	—	F	—	E	D	C	—
2	P	Da	Da	Da	P	—	M	—	G	R	S	—
	Se	sey	.	ban	dhey	.	di	—	1	ke	.	.
	F	F	—	F	F	—	G	A	G	F	E	D
3	M	M	—	M	M	—	P	Da	P	M	Ga	R
	Bha	ngi	.	di	.	.	lo	rey	.	so	khi	.
	C	D	$\overline{CD}$	E	E	—	D	C	—	C	—	—
4	S	R	$\overline{SR}$	Ga	Ga	—	R	S	—	S	—	—
	A	.	ma	.	ro	.	di	1	.	ke	.	.

TABLE 16

N.V	C.N.V	V.K	C.V.K	C.V	
				Mithuna	Matrika
S—14.5	S	SGP—25.5	MDS—66%	(1) MDS-DSG)	1. SGMD 76%
R—4 5	M	RMD—21.5	SGP—53%	(2) (nRM-RMD)	2. RMDn 47%
G—5	P	MDS—31.5	DSG		
M—12		PnR—11.5	RMD		
P—6		DSG—24.5	nRM		
D—5		nRM—17 5	PnR		
n—1					
Total 48				Seale : S R G M P D n	

Specimen No. 13

Word theme :

Hamey tua soney
Piriti patali
Adha diney amay
Ki dosey kandali
Mono mataye
Phesadey phelali
Dinobondhu bole
Dukhey buk bhasaye.

Translation :

I fell in love with you!
For what fault of mine,
Did you make me weep before the day was over?
You have put me to trouble
By charming my mind
So says Dinabandhu with a sorrowing heart.

Notation :

The song is complete in 16 bars, each containing 6 beats divided as 3/3

	A	A	B^b	B^b	—	B^b	C	C	—	C	—	—
1.	Da	Da	n	n	—	n	S	S	—	C	—	—
	Ha	mey	.	tu	.	a	r	so	.	ne	.	.
	F	—	G	—	A	B^b	G	A	G	F	E	—
2.	M	—	P	—	Da	n	P	Da	P	M	Ga	—
	Pi	.	ri	.	ti	.	pa	ta	.	li	.	.
	F	F	—	F	—	G	A	G	F	E	D	—
3.	M	M	—	M	—	P	Da	P	M	Ga	R	—
	A	dha	.	di	.	ney	.	a	.	ma	ye	.
	C	D	$\overline{CD}$	E	E	—	D	C	—	C	—	—
4.	S	R	$\overline{SR}$	Ga	Ga	—	R	S	—	S	—	—
	Ki	.	do	.	sey	.	kan	da	.	li	.	.
	B^b	A	A	B^b	—	C	—	D	—	C	—	—
5.	n	Da	Da	n	—	S	—	R	—	S	—	—
	Mo	no	.	ma	.	ta	.	y	.	e	—	—
	F	—	G	—	A	B^b	G	A	G	F	E	—
6	M	—	P	—	Da	n	P	Da	P	M	Ga	—
	Phe	.	sa	.	de	y	phe	la	.	li	.	.
	F	F	—	F	—	G	A	G	F	E	D	—
7,	M	M	—	M	—	P	Da	P	M	Ga	R	—
	Di	no	.	bo	n	dhu	.	bo	.	le	y	.
	C	D	$\overline{CD}$	E	E	D	C	C	—	C	—	—
8.	S	R	$\overline{SR}$	G	G	R	S	S	—	S	—	—
	du	.	khe	.	bu	k	bha	sa	.	ye	.	.

Hamey tua Soney

TABLE 17

N.V	C N.V	V.K	C.V.K	C.V Mlthuna	Matrik
S—24	S	SGP—47	MDS—54%	(1) (MDS-DSG)	(1) MDSG—66%
R—12	M	RMD—40	SGP—49%	(2) (nRM-RMD)	(2) RMDn—51%
G—11	P	MDS—52	DSG		
M—18		PnR—33	RMD		
P—12		nRM—39	nRM		
D—10		DSG—45	PnR		
n— 9					
Total 96			Scale—S R G M P D n		

Specimen No. 14

Word theme :

Sōkhi re ki kori bolo
Prano boro byakulo
Rojoni probhat hoilo dakhona
Ki dosey nagor ailona
Kunjo sajono kori
Asben shyam potho heri
Sokaley sanjhe phuler bichhona
Ki dosey nagor ailona
Kopaley sindoorer bindoo
Mukho jano purno Indoo
Hridoyete dilo koto jatona
Ki dosey nagor ailona
Nandalal kisorey boley
Ei chhilo ki mor kopaley
Mono banchha bidhata purailo na
Ki dosey nagor ailona.

Translation :

What to do my sakhi
My heart is restless
Look, the night is over
For what fault of mine my beloved didn't come !
I have decorated the garden
To welcome my Shyam
I have spread my bed from morning to night in expectation !
Why didn't my beloved come ?
With vermillion spot on his forehead
And face like full moon,
He has caused so much pain in my heart
Why didn't my beloved come ?
Nandalal Kishore says
Was this my fate ?
God did not fulfil my desire !
Why didn't my beloved come ?

Notation :

1	A	B^b	C	D	E	F	E	F	—	—	—	—
	D	n	S	R	Ga	M	Ga	M	—	—	—	—
	So	khi	re	ki	ko	ri	bo	lo	.	.	.	.

2 G A GA | B^{b} A GF EC | ED CB^{b} A | — — —

P Da PDa | nDa PM GaS | GaR Sn Da | — — —

Pra no bo | ro bya ku | lo . . | . . .

3 A A A B^{b} C D | C — DE E D E | C D C A — —

Da Da Da n S R | S — RGa Ga R Ga | S R S Da — —

Ro jo ni . pro . | bha . t hoi lo . | da kho . na . .

4 A A B^{b} C C D | C — DE E D F | C — — — — —

Da Da n S S R | S — RGa R Ga R | S — — — — —

ki do . se na . | go . r ay lo . | na . . . . .

'Sokhirere ki kori bolo

TABLE 18

N.V	C.N.V	V K	C.V.K	C.V Mithunas	C.V Mutrikas
S—16	S	SGP—25.5	DSG—65%	(1) (MDS—DSG)	SGMD 76%
R—8.5	D	RMD 30.5	MDS—63%	(2) (nRM—RMD)	RMDn 58%
G—7.5	R	MDS—38	SGP—43%		
M—6.5	G	PnR—14.5	RMD		
P—2	M	DSG -39.0	nRM		
D—15.5		nRM—19			
n—4					

Total 60 Scale : S R G M P D n

Word theme : (First stanza) of a big song.

Kolijuger Bahu biti
Ulotiey bandhey jhunti
Payer nupur jhumur jhumur
Chomkey bijuli

Muke keyson sajali
Jeyson chomkey bijuli
Bihayla ke chhairey hamey
Sangaila mojali.

Translation :

In what a peculiar way
The maidens and housewives in this age of *Kolijug*
Do their hair !
The bells of their foot bangles
Tinkle when they move.
Sparkling like lightening.

O, in what a way you have dressed me up !
I look like lightning !
I have left my husband
and have charmed somebody else !

Notation :

The notation of the first stanza of the song is given below. The same tune is repeated with different word themes. The first stanza is complete in 14 bars, containing 6 beats each, divided as 3/3.

1	A	B^b	C	D	E	F	E	F	—	—	—	—
	Da	n	S	R	Ga	M	Ga	M	—	—	—	—
	Ko	li	ju	ger	bo	hu	bi	ti	.	.	.	.
	A	A	A	A	$\bar{A}\bar{B}^b$	A	F	E	—	$\bar{F}\bar{E}$	D	C
	Da	Da	Da	Da	$\bar{D}\bar{n}$	D	M	Ga	—	$\bar{M}\bar{G}a$	R	S
	U	lo	ti	e	ban	.	dhe	.	—	jhun	ti	.
	$\dot{C}$	$\dot{C}$	$\dot{C}$	$\dot{C}$	B^b	A	A	G	F	F	G	G
	$\dot{S}$	$\dot{S}$	$\dot{S}$	$\dot{S}$	$\dot{n}$	Da	Da	P	M	M	P	P
	Pa	yer	nu	pur	jhu	mu	r	jhu	mu	r	cho	m
	B^b	A	G	F	G	—	—	—	—	—	E	E
	n	Da	P	M_b	P	—	—	—	—	—	Ga	Ga
	ke	bi	.	ju	li	.	.	.	.	.	Mu	ke

*According to the Hindu Cosmology universal time operates in a cycle of four ages moving gradually from the age of Truth and Harmony to *Kolijug* or the age of chaos.

4	E	E	G	F	E	E	D	E^b	D	C	A	B^b
	Ga	Ga	P	M	Ga	M	R	g	R	S	Da	n
	Key	so	n	sa	—	ja	li	.	.	jey	so	n
5	C	C	E^b	D	—	C	C	—	—	—	—	—
	S	S	g	R	—	S	S	—	—	—	—	—
	Cho	m	key	bi	—	ja	li	.	.	.	-	-
6	C	—	$\dot{C}$	$\dot{C}$	$\dot{C}$	$\dot{C}$	B^b	A	G	F	F	—
	$\dot{S}$	—	$\dot{S}$	$\dot{S}$	$\dot{S}$	$\dot{S}$	n	Da	P	M	M	—
	.	.	Bi	hai	la	ke	chhai	rey	·	ha	mey	.
7	F	G	B^b	A	G	F	G	F	E	—	—	—
	M	P	n	Da	P	M	P	M	Ga	—	—	—
	Si	nga	i	la	.	mo	ja	.	li	.	.	.

TABLE 19

N.V.	C.N V	V.K	C.V.K	C.V Mithuna-Matrika
S— 22·5	S	SgP— 34·5	MDS—55·7%	(MDS-DSG)—SGMD—69 2%
R— 6 5	G	SGP- 50	DSG—54·6%	(nRM-RMD)—RMDn—43·2%
g— 2	M	RMD—37·5	SGP— 52 %	
G— 17·5		gPn— 18·5	RMD	(SgP-gPn)—SgPn— 40·6%
M—18·5		MDS—53·5	SgP	
P— 10		PnR—23	nRM	
D—12·5		DSG—52·5	PnR	
n— 6·5		nRM—31·5	gPn	
Total 96				

In the songs Nachni Saila 9, 10, 11, 12, the priority of the *Khandamerus* and the *Matrikas* are distinctly defined. The dominant *Matrika* is (e) SGMD, which corresponds to a large number of Kheyal and Thumri themes in *Khambaj Raga* (Sanyal 1959 : 58). The sequence of the *Matrikas are :* { (e)SGMD, (f)RMDn } in all the four samples with different values. The melodic movement of the Nachni Saila songs are different for different samples. We observed in case of other forms, *Karam, Tusu, Danr Sailu* that same tune is repeated with different word themes in different songs. In Nachni Saila, new compositions are made by individual creative artists.

In sample (13), in addition to { e,f } , (d) SgPn has been included in the last position. The touch of the note 'g' brings in some

new variety on the core structure of Khambaj whether the inclusion (d) indicates a tendency to mix Sindhu or develop the Sindhu class is not apparent from this single sample. In other samples (d) may occupy higher position.

Even in this sample individual singers may make minor embellishments which may shift the *Matrika* sequence to a, b, c, d or even {a, b, d, c} or {c, d, f} . Thus, the distinction between these classes do not seem to be very rigid.

A specimen of the song belonging to a group termed as *Khyapar Dhua,* sung by travelling sadhus is given below :

Specimen No. 16

Word theme (first two stanzas) :

Gourango bhujongo phoni
Phoni dongson korey jaharey
Seki grihey roitey parey
Hotat *Baul* korey

Gour premer emni dhara
Bindhey korey jarasara
Maney na se aptohara
Donni bandhay ki korey

Translation :

*Gouranga the poisonous snake !
He, who is bitten by the poisonous snake
Can he rest at home any more ?
He is turned to a *Baul* in a moment

Such is the way of love of Gour !
One forgets oneself with the piercing pain.

Word theme (fiirst two stanzas).:

The melodic theme is complete in 20 bars, each having 8 beats divided as 2/2/2/2/. The same tune is repeated for the word theme of the subsequent stanzas.

D	E	D	C	C	—	C	—	C	—	C	—	C	—	F	F
R	Ga	R	S	S	—	S	—	S	—	S	—	S	—	M	M
Go	u	ra	ngo	bhu	.	jo	n	go	.	pho	.	ni	.	pho	ni

*Name of Sri Chaitanya.

F	G	G	F	F	F	E	D	C	C	C	D	CD	E	D	E
M	P	P	M	M	M	Ga	R	S	S	S	R	SR	Ga	R	Ga
Do	ng	so	n	ko	.	re	.	ja	.	ha	.	re	.	.	.

R	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Gou	ra	n	go	bhu	.	jo	n	go	.	.	.	.	.	.	.

C	C	F	F	F	—	F	—	G	B♭	B♭	B♭	A	—	G	—
S	S	M	M	M	—	M	—	P	n	n	n	Da	—	P	—
.	.	Se	ki	gri	.	hey	.	ro	i	te	.	pa	.	re	.

F	F	F	F	E	E	D	D	C	—	C	D	CD	E	E	E
M	M	M	M	Ga	Ga	R	R	S	—	S	R	SR	Ga	R	Ga
Ho	.	ta	t	Ba	.	u	l	Ko	.	.	.	re	.	.	.

D	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
R	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Gou	ra	n	go	bhu	.	jo	n	go	.	.	.	.	.	.	.

C	C	B♭	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	D	CD	E
S	S	n	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	R	SR	Ga
.	.	Go	u	r	pre	me	r	E	m	ni	.	dha	.	ra	.

C	C	E	E	D	E	D	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
S	S	G	G	R	G	R	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Bin	dhe	.	ko	re	.	ja	.	ra	.	sa	.	ra	.	.	.

C	C	C	D	F	F	F	F	G	B♭	B♭	B♭	A	A	G	G
S	S	S	R	M	M	M	M	P	n	n	n	Da	Da	P	P
.	.	Ma	ney	.	na	se	.	a	p	to	.	ha	.	ra	.

F	F	F	F	E	E	D	D	C		C	D	CD	E	D	E
M	M	M	M	Ga	Ga	R	R	S		S	R	SR	Ga	R	Ga
Dho	n	ni	.	ban	.	dha	ye	ki		ko	.	rey	.	.	.

Gourango

TABLE 20

N.V	C V.N.	V.K.	C.V.K.	C.V. Mithunas-Matrikas
S—79	S	SGP—103	MDS—66·8%	(1) (MDS-DSG)—SGMD 77 %
R—22	M		SGP—6·44 %	(2) (nRM-RMD)—RMDn 35·6%
	R	RMD—50	DSG—62 %	
			nRM—	
G—16	G		RMD—	
M—24		MDS—107	PnR —	
P— 8		PnR— 37		
D— 4		DSG— 99		
n— 7		nRM— 53		
Total 160			Scale : S R g G M P D n	

The sequence of the *Matrikas* is { c, f } , similar to most of the *Nachni Saila* samples. The rhythmic structure (4/4) is different from all other samples.

(To be continued)

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SANKAR SEN GUPTA

WOMEN IN ANCIENT LITERATURE AND FOLKLORE

(Continued from previous issue)

We should remember here that for the last 150 years Hindu reformers worked hard to remove some of the disabilities of Indian women, especially those from the higher castes. *Sati* was abolished in 1829 which we discussed earlier. The age of marriage for girl was raised to 10 from 8 according to India's Penal Code of 1860. The Child Marriage Act of 1929 laid down the age 14 as the minimum age for the marriage of the girls. The evil effects of child marriage were published by the great reformers which were also followed by the social-political leaders for decades before legislation was passed. Again was passed the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955. This raised the minimum age to 15. But the movement for raising the marriage age of the girls has not yet been stopped. There are some people who want to fix it at 19 or 21. The people of this idea are in favour of family planning, an officially recognised movement of modern India to control the population growth. Of course the age of marriage for the girls of the middle and upper caste families in Bengal has come to an average of 22 in general. Besides propaganda against child marriage, reformers, especially the upper caste Hindu reformers, conducted propaganda in favour of widow marriage It is due to their efforts that Widow Remarriage Act was passed in 1856. Then came the Indian Divorce Act, 1869. This again enabled Indian women to be dissolved the marriage entered into by Christians. Until 1954 when the Special Marriage Act was passed a marriage was solemnized under the Special Marriage Act of 1872. During this time we were also governed by the Indian Divorce Act of 1869, in the matter of divorce.[83]

Let us remember *purdah* system here once again. The earliest reference to the *purdah* system is to be found in the epic c. 100 B.C.. There we see that some kind of *purdah* was observed in certain royal families, which felt, probably on account of a notion of prestige, that royal ladies should not come in the gaze of vulgar eyes. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries *purdah* system became quite common in Bengal, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh. Both Vidyapati and Chandidas have referred to it.

It would, however, appear that soon after the beginning of the

83. Kapadia, K. M. op. cit.

Christian era, a section of society began to advocate for greater seclusion for women. *Purdah* also made its appearance in some dramas of Bhasa (c. 200 A.D.). Though in Indian society as a whole there is nothing like the modern *purdah* system in existence, there were certain restrictions on the movements of women. They could go out, visit their friends and relations but decorum required that they should not stay their houses for the night, or when their business was over. Even in the pre-Muslim times there was a section in society which advocated the use of veil for royal ladies for the purpose of increasing prestige. Gradually the veil was popularised which is prevalent now among the Hindu housewives. The general adoption of *purdah* system by the ruling and aristrocratic families of Hindu community is subsequent to advent of the Muslim rule. It should be remembered in this connection that Muslim women are prisoner to their menfolk. They are not entitled to *namaj* or pray to Allah in a party along with their menfolk. They are forbidden to attend to the burial ground for burying their dead husbands or sons. But a few aristrocratic women are found to fight in the battle field behind their men as well as some of them are seen in the top of administration. Some of the names of such women have already been mentioned earlier who do not come to any per centage. Further, it is necessary to remember about the social startus of Muslim women that there are one lakh and forty thousand *Paigambar* (prophet) of the Muslims but not a single of them is a woman. Besides, Muslim male can divorce his wife any time, by uttering the word *talak* for three times and immediately after the divorce if the divorced woman can spend a rupee and a quarter (*panch-siki*) she is entitled to remarry again to another person. But if she is pregnant, she will have to wait till she is delivered, if not, the Mollas or the Mollajans (priests) will ask her to perform *iddot* ceremony to enable her to be a bride again. The divorced husband too is entitled to remarry another woman, he can again divorce her in the same way. In order to avoid much unpleasant situation the Muslim women have taken their shelter under *purdah*. From them it has come to the common Hindu, partly as an imitation from the conqureors and partly as an additional protection for the womenfolk.

II

Enough has been said about the womankind in a general way. Here we will discuss in short a few positions of a woman in her life-cycle. We will start this discussion with wifehood.

Wifehood

Among the various types of human relationships, that between man and woman is the most important. The status of woman is the most significant criterion of progress of any society or culture. In the lower levels of culture this status "is one of dependence in theory and practice, woman being meant as an object of pleasure to man, the stronger sex. But in the earliest glimpse of record Indian society we find this stage already passed. Associated with body and mind, it becomes conditioned as personality with its sex and other differentiations." There were spiritual equality of man and man and man and woman, and the social practice has increased after Vedic period. "Indian thought views woman exactly as it views man as a person with a destiny. The search for this destiny makes her a pilgrim of worldly exellence." This has led to important consequences for national ideal of womanhood. Thus the "two egocentric individuals in search of life-fulfilment, and brought into most intimate social relations, are husband and wife in marriage." To realize this object of fulfilment, they have to learn to give themselves to each other before seeking to take from each other. "To teach only the wife to give, and emphasise this again and again, is to upset the balance; and to make the husband learn to take and neglect to give leads to less than fulfilment for both."[84] An English proverb goes thus,

"One should choose a wife with the ears rather than with eyes," for "a man's best fortune, or his worst, is his wife;" a Chinese proverb, "Negligence in farming may induce temporary poverty, but a mistake in marrying blights the whole life." Indeed, since the wife is the key to the house, he is by general consent a fortunate man who alights on a good one, for—

> A little house well filled,
> A little land well tilled,
> And a little wife well willed
> Are great riches."

And again :

> Two things doth prolong this life,
> A quiet heart and a loving wife;

whereas a bad wife, as the Germans say, "is the shipwreck of her

84. Ranganauda, Swami. op. cit.

husband." It is said in China again that "the more a wife loves her husband the more she corrects his faults;" and, on the other hand, accordisg to a Spanish proverb, "the woman who has a bad husband makes a confidant of her maid." An Indian wife says "A chaste wife is very bashful, and a bad one a great talker," also "A virtuous wife causes her husband to be honoured, a bad one brings him to shame." Equally significant is the Persian proverb which describes a bad wife as "a tree growing on the wall," i.e. like the fig tree, which undermines the wall by its roots. A goodlocking wife, it would appear, is not always a blessing, for—

> a fair wife, a white horse, and a back door
> will quickly make a rich man poor,

She is supposed to need looking after, inasmuch as he who hath a fair wife needs more than two eyes" and "he that hath a white horse and a fair wife never wants trouble." A Spanish proverbs, "A handsome wife brings no fortune," a Marathi proverb repeats the same warning, "A goodlooking wife is world's, an ugly one is our own." Again a Chinese proverb "Ugly wives and stupid maids are priceless treasures," for there is no chance of any one's running away with them;" with which may be classed the German adages "The blind man's wife needs no paint," and "A deaf husband and a blind wife are always a happy couple."

According to an old proverb, "An obedient wife commands her husband." It is generally agreed that no greater misfortune can happen to a man than to have a wife his master," for, as a Welsh proverb has been aptly translated tells us :

> The rule of a wife,
> a daughter's ill-life
> a son that is an untaught clown
> may turn the whole world upside down.

We find various suggestions in the matter a wife's counsel, one proverb saying "Take your wife's first advice, not her second," the reason assigned being that "Women are wise offhand, and fools on reflection." Gossiping wives are to be avoided, for, "The gadding wife will see a snake in the fire," that is, will make any execuse to run out; and a Sinhalese proverb to this effect, "You must get a talkative wife if you wish to receive slape on the face from every one," for she is sure, sooner or later, to make mischief. It is further said that "The beauty of a woman without a husband is in vain" and conversely, "A man without a wife is a house without a roof." It is also said that "Without

a wife the house is the abode of the devil;" but "With a wife the house doth joy," and "the death of the wife is ruin to the house." A Marathi proverb says, "The husband is the life of the woman." Again, it is said "Patience, recitude, friend, and wife, all four are tested by calamity," for, speaking of the average wife, it is added "She loves and she serves, but in the time of need she is off."*

A wife is an economic unit of production in the folk society. Thus she must be healthy, must have energy and vigour and must be capable of hard work. Outward beauty of a girl is seldom a matter of consideration in the choice of a daughter-in-law. So the folk instruction is *ghar bandho khato; garu keno choto; biye karo kalo, tae grihasther bhalo,*[85] build a small abode, buy a petty cow, marry a black skined girl, they are good for a family man. Every Indian girl wants to be ever dutiful to her husband, so she prays—

> May I be true to my husband
> Go on, go on, O drum
> May I have my honour in the village assembly
> May my words be true amidst my female friends.[86]

An ideal wife is she who has
mithe bol sasuri puje,
apandhan apni bujhe
swami seba, sanje bati,
Dake bale lakshmir smriti.[87]

It means, who has sweet-voice, worshipper of the mother-in-law, and one who keeps accounts of the wealth of the family, performs her duty to the husband and offers lamp to the god in the evening, bears the sign of Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth.

*Folklore of Women, by T. F. Thiselton-Dyer, *Reprint* by Singing Tree Press, Michigan, 1968.

85. ঘর বাঁধো খাট,
গরু কেনো ছোট,
বিয়ে করো কাল,
তাই গৃহস্থের ভালো।
লোকে বলে কাল খেঁদী,
যার বউ তার পরমনিধি॥

86. Barua. Hem. op. cit.

87. মিঠে বোল শাশুরী পূজে,
আপন ধন আপনি বুঝে,
স্বামী সেবা সাঁজে বাতি,
ডাক বলে লক্ষ্মীর স্মৃতি।

When a girl is blessed for a long life along with her husband, she feels happy and sings—

My husband, oh my husband, brave and sweet
My husband melts, where I do not see him
My husband, oh my husband, brave and sweet
I made an offering of a buffalo calf to Etawua Church
I cannot see my darling. . .
My husband, oh my husband, brave and sweet
I made an offering of a small bird to Raiumala Church
I cannot see my darling[88].....

But life is hard. The following is an poignant example of economic struggle for life. This is true social realism and from this sometimes misunderstanding and conflicts arise. Even inspite of the greatest effort how folk people is unable to provide the family is truly represested in this following Oriya song :

For this stomach,
For this stomach, I left for Bengal
For this stomach, I had all struggle
For this stomach, I pounded rice
For this stomach, I reaped the paddy
For this stomach, I worked on a shop
For this stomach, I received cane beating on my back
For this stomach, I went on dancing
For this stomach, I took to spinning
For this stomach, I find abuses on my lips
For this stomach, I met Yam Raj
For this stomach.[89]

How can a wife be satisfied with such sentimental words if she is empty-belly ? Quarrels arise and in a quarreling period a housewife of such a poor class say *bhat debar khamata nai kil marar gonsai*[90]

88. Barua, Hem op. cit.
89. ibid
90. ভাত দেবার ক্ষমতা নাই,
কিল মারার গোসাঞ
অভাবে নাতজামাই ভাতার।
সোণাথী পটলের ব্যাপারী
একটি পটল দেয় না
যে রাঁধি তরকারী।
অভাবে স্বভাব নষ্ট, মুখ নষ্ট রণে,
বড়ায় ক্ষেত নষ্ট, স্ত্রী নষ্ট মরণে।

which means, he has no capacity for findisg food, but is game at dealing fisticuffs. So, *abhabe nat jamai bhatar,* meaning, when there is no help the husband of the grand-daughter becomes the husband because he helps his grandmother for her existence.

In order to avoid such economic distress often young girls are married to wealthy old men.* The following is an example of the ill-luck of a young wife who is married to an old man. She has food to eat but no pleasure. Thus,

> The young wife makes bed
> Weeping she spreads the rags
> And waits for the old man
> Who cannot content her.

Below is another song where a daughter-in-law is getting troubled in the hands of the members of her mother-in-law's family :

> Thus spake a bird in Jahanabad
> The mother-in-law taunts, the father-in-law taunts
> Made to bear this, to my mother's home let me go

* একশটাকা দিলি বাবা দিলি বুড়ো বরে হে,
বরের সঙ্গে যাতে হ'লো পুরুলা সহরে গো।
পুরুলার লোকে বলে এটা তোমার কে বটে ?
লজ্জাক কারণ বলি, ঠাকুরদা বটে গো।
(লোকশ্রুতি, কলিকাতা)

কন্যাপণ রাখিয়া পাশা খেলার রীতি অনেক সমাজে প্রচলিত ছিল, মাহাতোদের একটি গানে কুমারী মেয়ের যে ব্যাকুলতা প্রকাশ পেয়েছে তা লজ্জাস্কর—

কন্যা:—পাশা খেলতে গ্যালি বাপু জুয়া খেলতে গেলি হে,
কেনে বাপ বিটি হারিলে।
গরু মো-ষিণী- বাবা, সেই না হারিলে
কেনে বাপু, বিটি-হারিলে ?
পিতা—গাই, মোষিণী, বিটি, ঘরের শিরোমণি—
তুমি বিটি পরের অধীন।
অর্থাৎ বাবা তুমি পাশা বা জুয়া খেলতে গিয়ে
কেন তোমার কন্যাকে বাজী রাখলে, আর
কেনই বা কন্যাকে হারালে ? গরু মহিষ
থাকা সত্ত্বেও তুমি তাদেরকে নিয়ে বাজী না ধরে
মেয়েকে হেরে আসলে ? উত্তরে পিতা বলছে,
গরু মহিষ গৃহের শিরোমনিস্বরূপ। তুমি পরের
অধীন (অর্থাৎ বিয়ে হয়ে গেলিই পর), তোমাকে
পরের হাতে যত শীঘ্রই তুলে দেওয়া যায়, ততই
ভাল। (লোকশ্রুতি, কলিকাতা)

Thus spake a bird in Jahanabad
The Jeth taunts, the Jethani taunts,
Made to bear this, to my mother's home, let me go.
The co-wife taunts, the beloved taunts,
Made to bear this, poison let me take
Thus spake a bird in Jahanabad

In such a situation she very judiciously complains to her husband that why everybody is taunting her ? She wants to know,

My sweet-heart, who is better than me ?
My sweet-heart kept a parrot
I'd teach it to speak
My sweet-heart who is better than me ?
My sweet-heart brought a co-wife
I'd teach her to dance
My sweet-heart who is better than me ?
My sweet-heart brought a mare
I'd teach her to jump
My sweet-heart who is better han me ?[91]

We may, however, point out that the ideal love and harmony between the husband and wife are necessary for the full growth and development of the family life and to promote the preservation and progress of society and its culture by enjoining upon the couple the procreation of children. Motherhood therefore has been the cherished ideal of every Hindu woman.

Motherhood

Motherhood is spiritual transformation of wifehood. This motherhood ideal is the highest peak of womanhood according to Indian culture. "To a Hindu, God is the mother of all creation. A nation that has educated itself to look upon God as mother has learnt to invest its view of women with utmost tenderness and reverence. The culture of the Hindu trains him to look upon woman, nay, to look upon the female of all species, as forms of Divine Mother." This we have discussed previously. This lady encompasses the whole family with her pure love. She is apparently simple, yet modern with an appeal to the modernness.

91 Amir Hussain "The Song of Patha", Folklore, Calcutta, November, 1968

It is hardly necessary to describe in detail how the ancient idea of regarding the mother had profoundly influenced Indian mode of thinking, literary and peaceful pursuits of life. Even the educated classes who have thoroughly imbibed and assimilated western ideas felt difficulty in giving up age-old habits, traditions, ideas and beliefs. Therefore in no circumstance a son can abandon his mother even if she is boycotted socially and religiously. He has to respect her more than the father. Thus we hear a saying, *anek durbhagya jar ghare nai ma, anek durbhagya jar nai anna cha,*[92] which means, it is a great misfortune for one who has no mother at home, as well as food and residence.

There are contrary views too. The only matricide known to Indian tradition is Parasurama. In his case the legend is probably invented to emphasise the duty of obeying the father. In this case his mother's resurrection is assured with the provision that she should never recollect her murder.

In the folk saying there is an idea where a mother feels sorry for the behavious of her son. She says. *beta biyalam bauke dilam, jhee biyalam jamaike dilam, apni holam bandi, pa chariye kandte basi*[93] meaning, I gave birth to son who has been given to my daughter-in-law, I gave birth to daughter, she has been given in marriage to the son-in-law, now I am all alone, I am passing my days as a maid under the control of my daughter-is-law, let me cry aloud sitting in a resting pose. But this type of conflict are not very common. The mother is so highly honoured in India that Hindus are not satisfied until they see divinity in the form of earthly mother. They say, one mother is greater than a thousand fathers, therefore, the Hindus prefer to call Supreme Being, as The Mother of the Universe. The Divine Mother is Greater than the "creator" of other religions. She is the producer of the first-born, lord of all creatures. Thus the cult of mother goddess is so venerable.

Step-mother

It is quite common to have more than one wife living in the same

92. অনেক দুর্ভাগা যার ঘরে নেই মা,
অনেক দুর্ভাগা যার নেই অন্ন ছা।

93. বেটা বিয়ালাম বৌকে দিলাম,
ঝি বিয়ালাম জামাইকে দিলাম,
আপনি হলাম বাঁদী—
পা ছড়িয়ে কাঁদতে বসি।
গিন্নী আছিলাম কালে—
জল বিলাইছি খাবলা খাবলা.
তেল বিলাইছি নালে।

home. The arrival of a step-mother at home is a threat to the children who also lose their confidence in and respect for their fathers. Thus a Badaga proverb goes on *Bala avve bandale appa bava* which means, step-mother at home makes the father a brother-in-law to his own children. Then there is a Bengali proverb in which it is said, *satmar bhalabasha panta bhate ghee, mathati murayc eso tel palta di,*[94] meaning, the step-mother's affection is like pouring ghee in stale rice, she says, shave your head clean and come, let me annoint it with oil and pour water.

There are quite a number of folktales like "Sukhu ar Dukhu", "Kuku-Mata" in Bengal which we know from L. B. Day, D. C. Sen, Dakshinaranan Mitra Majumdar, Sibratan Mitra, Henz Mode, Arun Ray, Mozharul Islam and others. Thus we do not want to repeat that which are so well-known to the students and scholars of folklore.

Daughter :

We will now look into the position of a daughter. It has been seen that a daughter has a lower status than a son. But the contrary views are also found. When a mother bore only sons and the parents hanker for a daughter, the birth of a daughter is welcome, she gets a most honourable status. It is not uncommon that a mother performs Gauri Puja and other rites to have a daughter. It is said in a popular saying hat *teen chele*r *par hai jhee, panta bhate dhale ghee,*[95] which means, if there is a daughter after three sons that family is so fortunate that ghee is poured out there in the stale rice. This is a strong rooted belief in Bengal and perhaps in other parts too. Still then a daughter is not allowed for the ancestor-worship. It is the sons alone who are regarded as eligible for offering oblation to their forefathers. Thus it is difficult to formulate any theory about the position and status of a daughter in the Hindu society.

It will be clarified in the next chapter that the women in the Vedic period enjoyed a higher status than that were enjoyed by their sisters in the post-Vedic period. The Creator Brahma had divided His own body into two, became male by one half and female by the other half. So wife is *ardhangini* and without her human society cannot grow or prosper. But it should be noted in this connection that the Lord

94. সংসার ভালবাসা পান্তাভাতে ঘি,
মাথাটি মুড়িয়ে এসো তেল পাল্টাদি ॥

95. তিন ছেলের পর হয় ঝি, পান্তাভাতে ঢালে ঘি
মেয়ে হব ঘর নিকুব পরব পাটের শাড়ী,
খড়খড়িতে চড়ে যাব রাজা শ্বশুর বাড়ী।

faced trouble in creating a woman, how he managed to suceed in that has been described in the concluding chapter of this study.

In ancient India the birth of a daughter was not deplorable. In course of time, in all patriarchal societies, the birth of a daughter became an unwelcome event. So there is a saying *puter mute kari,*[96] even the urine of a son brings money. This idea, even today, remains unchanged, but shows some amount of alteration in regards to features connected with economic pursuist as well as ranking in society, on the basis of occupation. The economic development of the recent past had two important effects—switchover from subsistence to the cash economy and the breaking up of some old ideas. It helps to establish contractual impersonal and pecuniary relations and opening of new avenues of earning one's livelihood in the newly developed society and life. After all, a son is accepted as a permanent economic asset of the family after which all parents hanker. But then, there is an ancient ritual for ensuring the birth of a scholarly daughter (Bri. Up. IV, 4, 18). It is true, of course, that this ritual did not become as popular as the *pumsavana** that is prescribed for the pocuring the birth of a son; but it clearly shows that the cultured parents were often as anxious for a daughter as they were for a son. It is said about the sons that *jatakshan dudh, tatakhan put*[97] meaning, as long the son is fed at his mother's breast so long he is mother's alone. After that he goes to his wife or to others. This is the inner meaning of this saying. Some thinkers have also said that a talented, well mannered and well behaved daughter is better than a son (Sam. III, 2, 6). In cultured circles such a daughter was regarded as the pride of the family (Kumarsamabhava VI, 63). So the only daughter of a parent is proud to say, *ekla mayer jhee garab karbo na to ki,*[98] meaning, I am the only daughter of my mother, why should not I be proud?

Again it is said in Germany, "Daughters are easy to rear; but difficult to marry;" and in Spanish adage it is said, "When a good offer comes for a daughter, don't wait till her father returns from

96. পুতের মুতে কড়ি, মেয়ের গলায় দড়ি।

* সনাতন ধর্মের প্রতিষ্ঠা ও বিকাশের সঙ্গে সঙ্গে গর্ভদান থেকে বিবাহ পর্যন্ত দশবিধ সংস্কার চালু হ'ল, তারমধ্যে গর্ভদান, পুংসবন ও সীমান্তোন্নয়ন—এই তিনটিকে গর্ভ সংস্কার বলা হয়। পুংসবন হচ্ছে পুত্রের জন্মের জন্য ধর্মীয় অনুষ্ঠান, ও আনুসঙ্গিক ভেষজের প্রয়োগ ব্যবস্থা।

সোনার আংটি আবার বাঁকা।

97. যতক্ষণ দুধ, ততক্ষণ পুত।
যতদিন থাকে কাঁথায় মুত, ততদিন থাকে মায়ের পুত।

98. একলা মায়ের ঝি, গরব করবো না তো কি?
বাপের ঘরের ঝি, আদর করবো না তো কি?
আদরের হয়েছে বা কি, দেখসে পাতনা পেতেছি।

market," for fear the opportunity should slip by; another German saying reminding us that "Daughters and dead fish are no keeping wares."

Grown-up daughters at home would occasionally seem to have been regarded the opposite of a blessing to their father, for "Three daughters and a mother" runs the German proverb, "are four devils for the father;" but, it is added, "Would you know your daughter, see her in company," for then she will cultivate every charm to make herself as attractive as possible.

Folk maxims of this kind might easily be multiplied, a popular Welsh adage reminds us that "the worst store is a maid unbestowed," but when it is remembered in words of our old proverb that "every Jack must have his Jill," there is hope for every daugher of Eve, for she may be the object of a passion similar to that described by Charles Decance :

> By the margins of fair Zurich's waters
> Dwelt a youth, whose fond heart, night and day,
> For the fairest of fair Zurich's daughters,
> In a dream of love melted Way. *

In the primitive and backward societies where the custom of bride-price prevailed, the birth of a daughter is a welcome event there. In some folk sayings it is said that *meyer nam Feli, jame nileo geli, jamai nileo geli,*[90] meaning, the name of the daughter is Feli, she will depart from her parent whoever takes her—either Yama (the god of death) or Jamai (son-in-law). Along with this saying there is another which we quoted earlier too and where we know that *dasa putra sama kanya patra bujhe dile,* means, a daughter is equal to ten sons if she is married to a suitable husband.

Sister :

The relation of the brothers and sisters is sweet and very affectionate. The joy of a married sister knows no bound when she finds her brother in her in-law's house. Addressing the brother she sings,

> O brother, you are a lion, a mountain
> But as tender as a lotus flower.[100]

*Thisel-ton-Dyer, T. F. cf. cit.

99. মেয়ের নাম ফেলী যমে নিলেও গেলি, জামাই (পরে) নিলেও গেলি।

100. Barua, Hem op. cit.

There is a saying, *dhaner tulya dhan nai jadi na pare bhula, bhaer tulya bal nai jadi na kare hinsa,*[101] which means, there is no better wealth than paddy, if there is no chaff, there is no better strength than brother if he is not jealous.

Tagore collected some unique *chharas* where the picture of a married sister is very nicely depicted in the following way,

gunabati bhai amar man keman kare
ae mashta thak didi kende kakiye
o masete neye jabo palki sujeye
har halo bhaja bhaja mash halo dari
ai re ai nadir jale jhap diya pari[102]

It means, O the talented brother of mine, I am feeling very much uneasy, O dear sister please stay there for this month suffering all the hardships, in the next month I will come to you with decorated palanquin and will take you cordially. My bone is becoming scorched and my flesh is getting ravine. Please do come or let me jump into the river. Because of brotherly affection and love a sister makes a ceremony which is known as *bhratridwitiya* where a sister prays for the longer life of her brothers. In this function they put *tilak* on the forehead of brothers with sandal-wood paste; when they put the *tilak* they recite

Swarge sankha dhwani, manche jokar, bone bhai ke fota dei,
bhai na jaio jamer duar, jamer dakshin duar,
jam duare diya fota jam gharet baira kata, bhaidwitiare dilam phota[103]

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101. ধানের তুল্য ধন নাই, যদি না পাকে বুলা,
ভাইয়ের তুল্য বল নাই, সাদ না করে হিংসা।
মায়ের পেটের ভাই, কোথায় গেলে পাই।
ভাইয়ের তুল্য মিত্র নাই, ভাইয়ের তুল্য শত্রু নাই।
আয় তই তই তই বিনু ধানের খই,
ভাই আসছে ভইনের বাগ্যা চলতি ঘোড়া লই।
বাপ রাজা তো ঝিয়ের কি? ভাই রাজা তো বোনের কি?
দাদা থাকলে রাজবাড়ী দাদা না থাকলে শুধু বাড়ী।
দাদা যে মরল তাকে ভাবি না, যমে যে বাড়ী চিনল।

102. গুণবতী ভাই আমার মন কেমন করে—
এ মাসটা থাক দিদি কেঁদে ককিয়ে,
ও মাসেতে নিয়ে যাবো পাল্কি সাজিয়ে।
হাড় হল ভাজা ভাজা মাস হল দড়।
আয় রে আয় নদীর জলে ঝাঁপ দিয়ে পড়ি।
(রবীন্দ্র সংগ্রহ)

103. স্বর্গে শঙ্খের ধ্বনি মর্ত্যে জোকার
বোন্ ভাইকে ফোঁটা দেয়।

it means there is sound of conch in the heaven and the sound of *ulu* (made by women with their tongue on sacred ceremonies and occasions) a sister puts a dot (a sacred mark) on the forehead of her brothers. O brothers please do not go to the death's south door. By this sacred dot I have caused impediment to death's door and you won't be able to cross that because I have put forth a sacred dot on the date of *Bhatridwitia* (second lunar day of Kartik). This is a popular rite that is practiced for a long life of the brothers in both the folk and urban societies.

III

Career :

All these speak of her sympathy for the human being. From this sympathy she has developed her finer tastes. She cultivates fine arts and crafts, music, dance, drama and makes artistic creations. Music and dancing form principle indoor games for the womenfolk. Girls used to play a number of courtyard games like 'hide and seek' and 'run and catch' which gave them good physical exercises. The cultivation of fine arts, paintings were encouraged. Not infrequently maidens used to give a dance in the court before a select audience.

The tradition of giving military training to girls continued in royal families, who were ruling over a considerable part of India during the 17th and 18th centuries.[104] The example of Rani Lakshmibai of Jhanshi, who excited the admiration eyes of her opponents by her remarkable bravery and sound generalship is noteworthy. Again it is well known that since the discovery of agriculture by women they used to take active part in agriculture. They also took part in the manufacture of bows, arrows, and other war materials. Samhitas refer to female workers who were conversant with dying, embroidery, basket-making and such kind of activities. Women in the lower strata of

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ভাই যাইও না যমের দক্ষিণ দোয়ার —
যম দোয়ারে দিয়া ফোঁটা, যম ঘরত বাইড়া কাঁটা,
ভাই দ্বিতিয়ারে দিলাম ফোঁটা। (বাংলার লোক সাহিত্য)

প্রতিপদে দিয়া ফোঁটা, দ্বিতীয়াতে দিয়া নিতা
আজ হতে ভাই আমার যমের ঘরে নিমের অধিক তিতা।
ঢাক বাজে ঢোল বাজে আরও বাজে কাড়া,
যোনের ফোঁটা না দিয়ে ভাই না যেও যম পাড়া।
না যেও যমের ঘর—
আজ হতে ভাই আমার রাজ রাজেশ্বর।
যমুনা দেয় যমকে ফোঁটা
আমি দেই আমার ভাইকে ফোঁটা
ভাইয়ের কপালে দিলাম ফোঁটা
যম দুয়ারে পড়লো কাঁটা। (বাংলার পল্লীগীতি)

104. Altekar, A. S. op. cit

society always take part in different production work. They also take part in weaker works in factories, building construction and the like works.

Teaching career was very common and is popular in the modern days also. Medical career was selected by some women which has now become very popular. Among the works translated into Arabic in the 8th century A.D. there was one midwifery book written by a Hindu lady whose name appears as Rasa in the Arabic grab. Lady doctors in the past, like those in the modern age, seem to be usually specialising in midwifery and nursing. Some women also served as personal attendants, door-keepers, guards and hair dressers in royal courts when the modern women are seen in the offices, factories, politics and policy-making bodies. When temples were built and endowed on a magnificent state, some people began to feel in course of time, that there should be singing girls attached to shrines. The introduction of dancing girls in temples tended to lower their moral and spiritual atmosphere. Some people began to visit shrines not so much to pay their respects to the deities, as to carry on their love intrigues with the singing girls employed there. In several parts of India big temples had attached to them 'dedicated' women who performed a variety of task : they sang and danced before the deity on certain occasions, performed certain routine works and menial tasks in the temple, and looked after the comfort of pilgrims, sometime even catering to their sexual needs. Indian public opinion was roused against these temple servants who were called *devadasi* in the first decade of this century. It is necessary to remember that the Bombay Devdasi Prevention Act X of 1934 and the Madras Devdasi (Prevention of Dedication) Act of 1947 declared this institution illegal as a measure to honour public opinion.

It is well-known that the general position and status of women were changing from age to age, and so naturally the attitude of society towards them could not remain static. We have, therefore to note and take into account the changes and attitude of society to that. Perhaps one of he best way to ascertain the attitude of society would be to look into the conflicts and struggles. These will also provide the angle of vision towards women overtaken by the misfortune of falling in the hands of ruffians or enemies. Such a situation is the real touchstone to test the genuiness of society's sympathy towards the weaker sex ; it enables us to find out how far man is prepared to raise above the prejudices of his sex and judge the women by an equitable standard.

Social conflicts :

Let us come to conflicts and quarrels that arose from social,

economic and religious problems. A Hindu girl, on marriage, passes from her father's house to that of her husband. There she comes into contact with persons who do not know her and whom she does not know. There is the possibility of conflict between her and her elders in point of habits, beliefs, faiths, culture and ideology with respect to social etiquette, dress and a number of other things. As she is expected to behave properly to add to the prestige of her father's family, and proper behaviour implies obedience to her husband, his parents and his elders, she has to give in and acquire their tastes and culture. She cannot, rather she is not expected to be assertive. The usual pattern of behaviour between the husband and wife is that of the dominance of the former over the latter. A frequent pattern of behaviour between the daughter-in-law and mother-in-law is that of conflict. The mother-in-law, and unless the daughter-in-law is very tactful or subservient to her, her husband and others, causes great sufferings. Mother-in-law too passes from this process about which the society is very much conscious. Therefore there are advice for a daughter-in-law as to what to do and not to do. The following is noteworthy—

khatmatiye hate nari katmatiye chai
masek tiner bhitar tar sinthir sindur jai[105]

means, a woman who struts and looks dragger, within three months she loses her vermilion in hair parting (i.e. husband).

In the pattern of conflict between daughter-in-law and mother-in-law, the mother-in-law has the socially recognised dominent role. The young girl thus not only finds herself unfamiliar but is made to realise at the first opportunity the dominating roles of her husband and of her mother-in-law in the life she now begins. She is unable to understand how to adjust herself to their new demands, and her parents cannot be of any use there because of their respect for the social ideals. Under the circumstances also society does not sympathize with her.

She passes through tensions all alone and attempts to adjust herself to the situation, relying as every Hindu woman does, on the mercy of God and seeking her consolation in the philosophy of *karma*. It is necessary to say a few words about the theory of *karma*. In its different aspects it may be regarded as the law of conservation of moral values, merits and demerits of actions. In its essence it means that there is no loss of the effect of work done and that there is no happening of events to a person except as the result of his own work. *Karma*

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105. খটমটিয়ে হাটে নারী কটমটিয়ে চায়,
মাসেক তিনের ভিতর তার সিঁথির সিঁদুর যায়।

without any attachment is better than *karma* aimed at some gain. But some work is better than no work. The principle of *karma* reckons with the material or the context in which each individual is born. While it regards the past determined, it allows that the future is only conditioned. These psychological reactions are all the more great when the girl is of tender age.

This kindhearted young girl feels sorry when she is not properly understood. When she sees her mother-in-law is tyrannical and without any consideration she gets shocked, but she will have to tolerate her because of social custom. The girl is always in apprehension of her mother-in-law's whim. But there are loving mother-in-law too and about her a daughter-in-law says—

My roll of carded cotton won't finish
My thread won't break
My mother-in-law won't say
Go out to fetch water.

Again a mother-in-law who has lost her housewifery to her daughter-in-law cannot but expresses her dissatisfaction and wishes to weep. The song runs thus,

age charjan pache charjan madhye sonar bati
baur bhatdun tini tapta tate macher jhol
burir bhatdun pacha panta tate pacha ghol
baur bichana khatpalang tate pata gadi
burir bichana chera katha tate chalir gadi
chawa be de bau enichi tari halam bandi
aman iccha kare giye je kanace basi kandi.[106]

Its meaning is, in the front there are four persons and in the middle there is a golden cup (daughter-in-law). The daughter-in-law wearing a golden necklace along with the grand children is going ahead in a procession. For daughter-in-law there is hot rice and fresh fish curry while for the mother-in-law there is stale rice with rotten battermiler, the daughter-in-law has better bedstead along with couch and mattress

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106. আগে চারজন পাছে চার জন মধ্যে সোনার বাটি।
বউর ভাতডুন তিনি তপ্ত তাতে মাছের ঝোল,
বুড়ির ভাতডুন পচা পান্তা তাতে পচা ঘোল।
বউর বিছানা খাট পালঙ্ক তাতে পাতা গদি।
বুড়ির বিছানা ছেঁড়া কাঁথা তাতে ছালির গদি
ছাওয়া বে' দে' বউ এনেছি তারি হলাম বাঁদি—
এমন ইচ্ছা করে গিয়ে যে কানাচে বসে কাঁদি।
(S. K. De, Indian Folklore, 1958)

when the mother-in-law has torn *kantha* together with heap of ashes as her bedding. I (Mother-in-law) have brought daughter-in-law by giving marriage of my son to her, now I am subordinate to her. I feel like weeping sitting in a solitary place behind the house. Aiming at such a housewife there is a saying in Bengali,

bau ginni hale tar baro farfarani,
meghbhanga roddur hale jeman carcarani[107]

which means if daughter-in-law becomes mistress of the house, her hustling become awful; just as sunshine, immediately after clouds are disappeared, becomes tremendously keen. Thus it is said that *kalir bau ghar bhangani,** meaning, the daughter-in-law of today (Kali Yuga) is a disruptor of the family.

The mother-in-law cannot conceive that her own son can be hostile to her. Out of her fondness to her son she says *ki karbe pute nitya se to kanbhanganir kache jai sute,*[108] what my poor son will do, daily he lies down with his wife who poison his ears. In such a condition no human being can feel happy not to speak of a young girl of teen age. Thus in the following folksong a daughter-in-law is sending her message to her mother through a bird Kaffu :

O Kaffu, you are from my mother's side
Speak, O, speak in the courtyard of my parents
My mother will hear you
She will send my brother to take me
O what sorrowful days have come
I wish to get out of it
I wish to reach my father's house.

Then there are other types of conflicts. To a Hindu married woman vermilion spot on her forehead and hairparting is the sign of her husband's living. There are sayings by which a daughter-in-law is being abused by other members of the family perhaps for her unwillingness to do a work of her dislikings. Thus they say,

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107. বউ গিন্নী হলে তার বড় ফরফরানী,
মেঘঢাকা রোদ্দুর হলে যেমন চড়চড়ানি।
* কলির বউ ঘর ভাঙানী ।

108. কি করবে পুতে—
নিত্য সে তো কানভাঙানির কাছে যায় শুইতে।
নিত্যই দেখি কাঁথাকাপড় খুইতে।
একদিনও দেখলাম না পুতের কাছে শুইতে।

ke dibo chuta ki dibo chuta, bhasur merche gale guta[109]

means, what shall be the pretext, what shall be the pretext, it is the elder brother of my husband who has given a hit at my check. Since it is a taboo even to talk to him for the wife of a younger brother, not to speak of touch, it is a great offence for a man to touch the cheek of his younger brother's wife. In another saying we know that how economic condition of a family is a factor in maintaining irregular relations even among the dearest kins.

samaye sab hai bou bhagna bhai, gharer stri apan nai
jakhan hate paisa nai or *abhabe nat jamai bhatar*[110]

It means, in good season, sister, nephew and brothers everybody pretend to be dearest and nearest but during adversity even the wife of one is not his own. Again, in need the husband of a granddaughter is equal to one's own husband. Further, seeing the goodluck of a neighbouring girl others do not hesitate to say *sakaleito meye keu jachche palki chare keu rayeche cheye*,[111] means, all of us are women but some ride in palanquin while others look along. Following is a song where a different picture of a daughter-in-law who being grieved has left her husband's place to her parent's home can be had—

Without a nose ring, I'll not go, I'll not go
To fetch me, first of all, came my father-in-law
I'll not go, I'll not go,
The mother-in-law has been turned out,
May be to fetch me, thereafter, came my beloved.
I'll not go, I'll not go.
He tells me hundreds of platitudes
May be. Without a nose ring. I'll not go, I'll not go.

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109. কি দেব ছুতা, কি দেব ছুতা,
ভাসুর মেরেছে গালে গুতা।
এক যে ছিল গেরস্তের বউ কবাটের আড়ে,
নাচতে নাচতে পড়ল গিয়ে ভাসুরের ঘাড়ে।
বউ হয়েছে রঙের বিবি ভাসুর মানে না।

110. সময়ে সব হয় বউ ভাগনা ভাই,
ঘরের স্ত্রী আপন নয়, যখন গ্যাটে পয়সা নাই।
অভাবে নতে জামাই ভাতার,
সেই মামা সেই মামী পুকুর পাড়ে ঘর
তখন মামী ভাত চাইলে হাঁড়ি কড়কড়।
সেই মামা সেই মামী পুকুর পাড়ে ঘর
এখন মামী ভাত কেন গো ঘিয়ে সরসর। (কল্যাণী দত্ত, —ব. সা. প. প.)

111. সকলেই তো মেয়ে
কেউ যাচ্ছে পাল্কী চড়ে কেউ রয়েছে চেয়ে।

Then there is a saying, *bura hali tabu na gelo thant, rar haye jeno sarer nat,*[112] you have grown old, but have not yet left of coquetishness, you are a widow, but you roam freely as a Brahmi bull.

Another picture is depicted in the following song. Here it is seen that how the wife of the elder brother usually reacts when she is approached by her *devar* at a time when her husband is absent.

Slightly he twisted my fingers in the night
And woke me up
O parrot, in the night he woke me up
dur dur said I
It is a cat or a dog or a sinner that has opened the door.
Not a cat nor a dog, never has a sinner opened the door
It is Nandlal, your devar, bhabiji, who has opened door.
Come, you may Babu, but go and sleep on your brother's cot
Not there bhabiji, there are mosquitos which will eat me up.
With you will I sleep. I will sleep happily on your cot.
Not here, not here Babu, there are sharp knives on my cot
And here is deadly she-cobra which will take your life.
How then bhabiji does my brother save his life
Great is the magic of your brother, Babu powerful is his spell
It is through that he saves his life,
O parrot, his magic makes his cot his own.[113]

Another very interesting song can also be quoted that depicts the relation between a husband and wife who have entered into married life by their own initative. It is a Gambhira folk song of Maldaha. Here the conflict between the husband and wife is clear. The conflict is all the more painful because the couple engaged in family life through love-marriage. This also speaks of economic hardship of the family owing to unemployment problem. The song goes thus

Stri— *love-marriage kare sarajivan dhare*
jale marlam hai
Asfalan tar sove ki jar akti paisar
murad nai

Wife— Alas ! for luck ! by love marriage I have caused acute pain and sufferings all through my life.

তোদের হলুদ মাখা গা,
তোরা রথ দেখতে যা।
আমরা পয়সা কোথায় পাব,
আমরা উল্টোরথে যাবো।

112. বুড়া হলি তবু না গেল ঠাট, রাঁড় হয়ে যেন ষাড়ের নাট
113. **Folklore Calcutta.**

Is it befitting to outburst for him who has no capacity in earning even a paise!

Swami— *a katha bhaboni takhon*
biye karechile jakhon
basai dakiye chithi pathaiye (kato)
prem nibedan
tomar tore bap ma chere
amar eman dasha hai

Husband—Ah! why did not you consider this when exasperated me for immediate marriage
By calling me at home, by sending letter after letter why you were so active in courting for love?
I have left my parents due to you which is the reason for the present wretched condition of mine

Stri- *hujur bale dakbe amare*
chalbe hukum tamil kare
edik-odik challe dibo chakri khatam kare
takhan to to kare marbe ghure
khabe ki balo akhar chhai

Wife— You will call me Madam and will carry out all my orders. I will discharge you from your service if you move to-and-fro when you will ramble aimlessly. If I do so what else you will take other than eating the ashes from the fire-place

Swami- *Sarkare jai balihari a juge amara i anari*
purusate pai nako kaj chakri pai nari
era chere hanri, dulie sari
sab kaja i dakhal karte chai

Husband—Bravo, the Government
In this age we (the men) are awkard
A male is unable to procure a job,
but there are attractive openings for the womenfolk
Giving up cooking pot and by shaking *sari* they (the women) want to capture all employments

Stri— *Sakti rupini nari*
English chanel dichchi pari
Hati nei buke Reba Rakshite
dekha bahaduri
ei desher latsaheb nari
aro kato praman chai

Wife— Women are all powerful,
They can cross the English Channel
Miss Reba Rakshit can put an elephant on her breast,
See the valour. The governor of this state (West Bengal —Miss Padmaja Naidu) is also a lady, what more examples do you need.

Swami- *amar mato acho jara bekar*
age karte sekho rojgar
tarpar love marriage karo naile
bhabisyat andhakar
strir rojgarer bhorsha korle amar
dasha habe hai

Husband-- Oh those who are unemployed like my humbleself try to earn first and then make courtship or your future will be as dark as mine.
If you depend on the earnings of your wife
Your fate will be no better than mine.

Stri— *etokal chele upare*
namiyeche swadhin sarkare
sashan garjan cholbe na aar patnir upare
bhalo na lagile jabo chale
patir moder abhob nai

Wife- So long you (the malefolk) were on the top
The national government has pulled you down
No more command to a wife will henceforth be tolerated.
If we are not satisfied with their dealings and behaviours, we will divorce our husbands, we have no want of husbands.

Inspite of all these there are great demands for sweet relations between husband and wife, between *bhabiji* and *nanad* and between the mother-in-law and daugther-in-law. Thus, it is said in a Bengali proverb, *daler madhye musuri, manuser madhye sasure,** meaning, among the pluses, Musuri and among the human being, it is Sasuri, (mother-in-law) is most welcome. In the like way a husband is fond of his sister-in-law. He says, *deber madhye kali, manuser madhye shali,*** Kali among the gods and goddesses and Shali (sister-in-law) among the relatives are charming. The wife of the people of this temparament wants, *tak jhal ar kara bhatar mag bale ai chai amar,**** sour, pungent and strict husband, the wife says I want all these.

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* ডালের মধ্যে মধ্যে মুসুরী মানুষের মধ্যে শাশুরীয়ী

** দেবের মধ্যে কালী মানুষের মধ্যে শালী

*** টক ঝাল আর কড়া ভাতার, মাগ বলে এই চাই আমার।

NOTES AND NEWS

In Hindu religion, it is a belief, commonly shared by the tribals of different areas, that it is only the body which is destructible and not the soul which remains immortal. They also believe that to aquire a human body the soul has to pass through a complete life-death-cycle aquiring bodies of eighty four lakhs creatures one after another. The soul can attain 'moksna'—its ultimate goal and can make itself free from this life-death-cycle only after it has possessed by a human body and only if that human body does good deeds and aquires unusual wisdom. In case the soul does not attain *moksha* it has to pass through the complete cycle to aquire human body.

Among the Gonds, for instance, this world is compared with a dark room with eighty four lakhs chambers each chamber representing body of a creature. The dark room has only one door. To attain '*Moksha*' the soul, like a blind man passes through each chamber (i.e. aquires body). By sacrificing animals, tribals believe that they facilitate the process of attaining 'Moksha' as it enables the soul to aquire, human body in a shorter period of time and it is only through the human body that soul can do good deeds and attain unsual knowledge that may lead it to the 'Moksha'. The Gonds, however, consider human sacrifice as the greatest sin because sacrificing human body means depriving the soul of doing good deeds and aquiring knowledge and hence, depriving the soul of attaining 'Moksha'. In that case the soul again will have to pass through the complete life-death-cycle comprising of eighty four lakhs creatures. —A. P. Mangla.

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* * * * * *

Sri R. C. Mehta, Professor and Head, Department of Music, M. S. University, Baroda is busy to collect materials for India's. Who's Who of researches in folksongs and folk music. The following particulars are needed by him

(1) Full name (2) Address (3) Age (4) Education (5) Details about present post and profession or occupation. (6) Field of Specialization. (7) Author (Books and Outstanding Research papers mentioning language). (a) Title, (b) Language, (c) Date of Publication, (d) Name of Publisher, (e) Price, (8) Any other relevant data separately. Forms will be supplied by him on demand.

BOOKS REVIEW

A POLYGLOT OF FOREIGN PROVERBS comprising French, Italian, German, Dutch, Spanish, Portuguise and Danish, with English Translations by Henry G. Bohn, London, 1857. Republished by Gale Research Company, Detroit, Demy 580 pages, 1968, $ 14.50.

We would all profit by Bohn's admirable work that speak for itself It is arranged alphabetically under countries much of which are common to Indian languages and dialects and a scholar of Indian proverbology would be much benefitted by reading it since it will open a new way of research.

The author included a 175 pages index that not only quickly directs the reader to particular proverbs but also is invaluable for comparative study.

A comparative linguist himself, the author, attained maximum accuracy by having the proverbs of each language read over by a native of the country. In his preface the author wrote "A task so various and complicated could not well be executed without aid, nor do I pretend to be master of all the languages included. Accordingly, I sought assistance of competent scholars...." Certainly what is included in the book is well handled. Henry Bohn fishes with a valiantly long pole and has chosen what he considers to be his prize catches. It is an excellent work for what it represents. What is here is good so it deserves its place in every library.

—Shibnarayan Kabiraj

OBSCURE RELIGIOUS CULTS, by Sashibhusan Dasgupta, 1946, 3rd Edn. by Firma K. L. Mukhopadhayay, Demy, 136 pages, Calcutta-12, 1969, (Price not mentioned).

The book under review is third edition of Dr. Dasgupta's Ph. D. dissertation of the Univtrsity of Calcutta where he was the Ramtanu Lahiri Professor and Head of the Dept. of Modern Indian Languages till he faces his immature death. This book has attained him a world recognition as one of the first rate scholar of India.

The book has four parts with 5 Appendices. The first part deals with the Buddhist Sahajia Cult, the second part deals with the Medieval Sahajia Schools, the third part deals with the Nath Cult and part four deals with the Dharma Cult and the Bengali literature. Although a number of new publications have appeared on similar or allied subjects during the last 23 years or on such topics that are dealt with by the author, and inspite of their throwing some new lights on different points and supplying new information "they do not assail the

views held and explained in this book" writes author in the preface of the second edition. The author could not write a preface in the third edition because it appeared after his death. This is a most valuable book on the subject and it deserves to be read by all advanced students.

—Samir Ghosal

THE NAGAS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, Verrier Elwin, Oxford Univ. Press, 1969, Demy 650 Pages, Rs. 42.50.

While introducing the book Dr. Elwin writes— "A few years ago I made an anthology of extracts from the nineteenth century books and articles, now rare and only available in larger libraies, about the North East Frontier of India....Here I have extracted passages about the Naga people on a broad geographical basis.....covering a period 1827 to 1896. ... Although at no time did I hold an official position in the Naga areas, my knowledge of the Nagas is not confined to books.." Unfortunately he could not see printed book in his life time. It is N. K. Rustomji, an ICS officer and a long associate of Dr. Elwin, who has completed the editing and has also written a foreword. He writes forewording the book that "Verrier Elwin had shown me, and we had often discussed, the manuscript of this anthology while it was under preparation." So after Elwin's death "I was happy to accept Mrs. Elwin's and the Oxford University Press's request to tie up the loose ends and prepare it for publication—which meant little more than crossing the t's, dotting the i's, rummaging for suitable illustrations and, where the text was obscure, exploring the original sources."

The book has altogether 115 articles which is divided into seventeen chapters. The first chapter has 8 articles which is named as the Country of the Nagas, second to seventeen chapters have six, two, fifteen, five, two, three, three, one, three, three, five, nine, six, nine, nineteen and sixteen articles respectively in the following heads —The Nagas : A General Review, Some Aspects of Naga History, Early Tours Among the Nagas, The Angani Nagas, The Ao Nagas, The Lohta Nagas, The Rengma Nagas, The Sema Nagas, The North-Eastern Nagas, The Nagas of Cacher, The Nagas of Manipur, Naga Religion. Some Naga Customs and Traditions, Head Hunting and War, Development and Miscellaneous Notes. Necessary to note that all writers represented in the book under review are not anthropologists and their enquiry is not strictly scientific. But from their records emerge valuable descriptions of the history, ethnography and problems of the people. It covers the field with a convenient degree of adequacy. No student of Tribal affairs can afford to miss it.

—S. S. G.

WOMEN IN INDIAN FOLKLORE, Edited with and introduction by Sankar Sen Gupta, Foreword by Smt. Indira Gandhi, Inidan Publications, Calcutta-1, D/crown, 62+326 pages, 1969, Rs. 45/-.

It is book number sixteen of Indian Publications Folklore Series where besides a long and scholarly introduction, twenty-six articles from twenty-six scholars of different parts of the country have been included. The book purports to present both in theory and practice the social position, status and the influence of womankind. In it, women's characterstics, tastes, loves, secrets, curiosity, etc. have been treated taking the help of oral traditional materials. Women's character etc. can never be defined in strict terms but a study of such papers as included in the book under review will reveal in no uncertain terms that the more one learns of women, the more one becomes conscious of the basic limitations of his knowledge about the womankind. In her foreword, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India, asks 'How is it possible to describe the role of women in a society ?' She also points out that "In the epics one finds women who were examples of courage and daring. In classical literature they become more decorative and even anaemic and were assigned the place of conservers, not innovators But in the folk literature one finds them full of life..... This book gives a picture of the Indian Women as mother, moulder, and home-maker." In it Tamil Women. Women of Eastern Pakistan, Jain Women, Women of Assam, Marathi Women, Women of Rajasthan, Punjabi Women, Women of Buddhist Society, Women of Gujarat, Bengali Women, Oriya Women, Telugu Women, Nair Women, Women in Hindi dialects and folk songs—Magahi, Bhojapuri, etc., Sikh Women, Hindu and Muslim Women etc. are discussed as they are depicted in the customs and traditions of the respective communities. What makes this book both unusual and all the more valuable for those who not only want to feast their eyes but also wish to understand the position of women in different roles of their lives is that it is a comprehensive and critical survey which seeks to interpret women from a new angle and which is also an attempt for the re-orientation of folklore. We are glad to note that Sj. Sankar Sen Gupta, the famous and diligent folklorist of India has brought to bear his expert knowledge and advanced thinking upon the subject.

—B. N. Shastri

JUST PUBLISHED

VIHARAS IN ANCIENT INDIA—A Survey of Buddhist Monesteries by Dr. D. K. Barua M.A.•Dip lib, D. Phil. P.R.S., Lecturer in Pali C. U. Demy 264 pages, Rexin bound, Rs. 25.00

INDIAN PUBLICATIONS, 3, British Indian Street, Calcutta-1

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